

JA
ZUM
LEBEN -

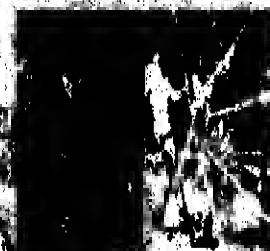


NEIN
ZU
DROGEN

Offizieller Ersttagsumschlag
der Postverwaltung der Vereinten Nationen



JA ZUM LEBEN - NEIN ZU DROGEN



Nationen S5



"YES TO LIFE - NO TO DRUGS!"

(United Nations, 1987)

GAMEFINDER

NOTE TO JOHN WALKER'S PEOPLE: Your games are 'Autistic Aoudad' and 'Richard Johnson.' Look for them that way in future in "Gamefinder," an exclusive Grendel Press service....

ADDITIONAL NOTE: In press, anything datelined 'Jamul' is written by the GM. Keep that in mind. You cannot use that dateline; I won't use anything else.

ALB BABA	29
AOUDAD	30
BEAR	31
BISSEL	40
CASSOWARY	33
COLFAX	34
CRESCENDO	39
DIK-DIK	29
GO FISH	29
HOTELLERIE ...	39
JOHNSON	31
KING	37
LION	29
MEIGS	37
NILGAI	32
PIMMALIONE ...	39

Hmm...that didn't fill the page. I guess I'd better start a batch more games....

Anyway - DEADLINE FOR ALL GAMES (u.o.s.) is

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 2, 1987

("U.O.S." - "unless otherwise stated")

IF IT'S FREE,
LEAVE TWO!

VOLUME XI, NUMBER 10



AUGUST 9, 1987

Never mind what it says up there; that's just a personal statement. This is actually COSTAGUANA, a journal of postal gaming and disjoint dissimulation, published by Conrad F. ("Uncle Connie") von Metzke, 4374 Donald Avenue, San Diego, CA 92117-3813, USA. Home 'phone (619) 276-2937. Office 'phones are currently in a state of chaos, please call at home - evenings before 11 p.m., though I may well be at an A.A. meeting, so be prepared for failure.

EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY: Telephone contact is going to be difficult. I have been assigned to the night shift, from midnight to 9 a.m. I therefore tend to sleep in the early-to-late evenings. Until further notice, PLEASE do not try to telephone your moves. If you absolutely must, try to do so during daylight hours on the Saturday or Sunday before deadline. Thanks....

Games open: (1) Railway Rivals, unlimited; \$2 fee plus sub. Game and rules available for \$15 postpaid if you haven't got them. (2) Regular Dip; one game, no fee, sub required throughout. (3) "Rails Through the Rockies," the first postal game ever, \$2 fee, sub required, game and rules available for \$22 postpaid.

SUBSCRIPTION RATE: Whatever. I charge you what it costs me. That seems to average \$1.25-\$1.50 per copy. (The last issue cost \$1.24, the lowest in recent history.) What you do is this: Send a deposit to my accountant, Doug Brown, P.O. Box 584, Penngrove, CA 94951-0584. He'll deduct actual cost of each issue from your balance, and notify you when you're running low. DO NOT SEND ME ANY MONEY - it must go to Doug. For purposes of approximating your remittance, \$10 will get you roughly eight issues.

TO LARRY, WITH LOVE

For many years, you have been a fixture of this hobby. Without you, it would have seen a major lack.

For as many years, you have been a friend. Never mind that I haven't called on you in that capacity; that's my fault, it says nothing about you. Lately, you have driven DIPLOMACY WORLD to the highest level it has ever achieved. Rod didn't do that, neither did I. It took you. But mainly, I fall back on the person - the latent friend, the supporter.

Larry Peery - I'm glad you're here. Don't leave....

WITH OUR MOST SINCERE CONDOLENCES

Up in the northern reaches of California, in the suburbs of Sacramento, there lives a young lady - presumably a pleasant person - who, until last week, was named Deborah Kathleen Walcott. I regret to have to tell all you readers that, on Saturday, August 1st, Ms. Walcott (presumably) changed her surname by marrying Bart Alan Denny. In the process, she has doomed herself. The reason is simple, and believe me, no Diplomacy fanatic or "Dip widow(er)" will be the least surprised when I tell you: The wedding was scheduled at 5 p.m., and we presume that we know what went on after that. But in the morning, what do you suppose the Hon. Mr. Denny was doing?

WRITING DIPLOMACY MOVES!!

My dear Ms. Walcott/Denny, please let me warn you while you are still within California's statutory period for annulment: YOU HAVE TROUBLES! This Diplomacy disease has destroyed thousands over the years...and Bart has the audacity, on the morning he is supposed to be contemplating the joys of nuptial bliss and children and mortgages, to send an army to slaughter innocent Serbs!

I wish you well.

(End of humour.) I truly do wish you well, both of you. Perhaps the fact that your wedding anniversary is exactly one day before mine will prove auspicious. And when you do get around to the matter of children, please call me, I am absolutely dripping with advice. In fact, I may even be able to provide (for cheap) a slightly used model.

////////////////////////////////////

Oh, by the way - you mean it really is just "Bart?" Gee, somehow I kind of figured it must be Barton, or Bartholemew, or Friedrich Bartbarossa, or something equally bloated.....

===== / ===== / ===== / ===== / ===== / =====

IN EXPLANATION OF THIS ISSUE'S DELAY

No, no, no - for a change, it isn't the issue which is delayed, it's just the promised photo-essay on the trip to Catalina this year.

The article is written, the photos are taken and assorted - but, like a complete fool, I neglected to mail the negatives to Doug Brown for his customary processing!

Well, that's okay. So now what we have is six pages of the next issue already typed, and plenty of fine space for the most extensive letter column in ages.

But don't go hide and pout quite yet. The masterful Catalina piece, "Still Life With Pork," will grace your table soon.

.....

Oh by the way - another way to send moves to me, besides mail and telephone, is to join CompuServe. Just buy a computer, a modem, and some software (and a couple of 'phone cables), and get going! In fact, if you want good software, I'll copy and send (free) PROCOMM (PC-DOS or MS-DOS). I also have, again for free, one modem to give away. It ain't much: 300-bps, non-Hayes, non-autodial - but if anyone is interested, better you than the trash man. \$2.40 postage anywhere in the U.S. or Canada. You cable it yourself. Multiple requests received within ten days will result in a random drawing.

Anyway - if you're going to use CompuServe for moves, save yourself a subscriber search and just send an EasyPlex to me (Conrad von Metzke, 73270,2727 - please note, this number has changed from previous announcements; for a time I had two accounts with CompuServe, and this is the one I kept; the other one has been formally cancelled) and I will guarantee to access the system not earlier than 6 p.m. Pacific time on deadline day.

Note: Cost for CompuServe (you must be a member to use the service) is now only \$6 per connect-hour, no matter what time of day. And if you really get interested and want to spend a lot of time with the system, ask me for a free copy of AUTOSIG (again, PC- or MS-DOS only), which will save you a hell of a lot of connect charges composing and replying to messages.

/// /// /// /// /// /// /// /// /// /// /// /// /// /// /// /// ///

A PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

from the Exchequer

(Doug Brown)

WARNINGALERTDESPERATIONHELPCAUTIONPANICFIREACHTUNGSOCCORROPAYATTENTIONCOSTANEEDSMONEYETCETCETC

((Editor's Note: Normally, I wouldn't print tripe such as this. However, Doug is a good friend, and he is doing me a big favour by collecting money for me. So I figure I do owe him his day in print.))

For the past three issues of COSTAGUANA I've been collecting the money for subs for Uncle Connie (Jamul). Of the 106 subscribers listed by Conrad, 16 have sent money to me. Over the four-month period I've collected \$116.50. As closely as I can guess, each issue of our hobby's number-one-rated 'zine (for two years running) has cost Conrad \$165.36. Of course this does not count anything for game fees, time, creativity - or even typing paper, floppy disks and white-out. So that means that we have let our best hobby publication, printed by dear sweet Conrad, spend \$496.08 and take in \$116.50. Therefore, you readers, who rated COSTAGUANA a 9.266 in the North American Diplomacy 'Zine ("Runestone") Poll, have stuck your favorite publisher with a three-issue bill for \$379.58!

Now, soon Conrad will have his turn with comments. He'll likely say some B.S. about how some people already had subscription money on account; how his financial crisis has lessened; how he really doesn't think he's losing that much money. But, listen to me, gentle reader; as loveable as Conrad is, and despite his flowing prose and literate demeanor, he is a complete and utter boob when it comes to accounting! He's losing his (extra long) shirt(s) in the deal!

Conrad printed the names and addresses of 106 loyal subscribers in the last COSTA. Of these, 90 haven't passed one cent of money to me to receive their favorite hobby magazine. The responsible 16 who have sent money are: Simon Billenness, Nelson Haintzman, Mark Weidmark, Craig Mills, Bruce Linsey, Doug Beyerlain, Doug Baker, Ken Peel, Bob Acheson, Eric and Cathy Ozog, Jaff Hoffman, Tom Engelhardt, Mark Fruah, Hugh Christie and Jim Burgess. These are all the donors from May First through August First.

Hopefully, 80 or so more of you will kick in money following this issue. Mail to: Doug Brown, PO Box 584, Penngrove, CA 94951-0584.

And thank you, Conrad, for your top-quality publication for the second year in a row....

((Zzzzz - huh? Oh, you mean it's finally my turn?

((Well, for starters, I'd like to thank Doug for his intense lobbying efforts on my behalf, and - while he's correct that I am going to throw out some comments that will tend to water down what he said - the fact remains, and both you and he may be startled, that the "free ride" just ended.

((First - Doug has listed various names of people who've subscribed. The first two occurring to me are John Piggott and John Colledge, whose money came directly. There are others. Suffice it to say that there are by no means 90 people "in arrears."

((Second - Doug mentions 'previous sub credits.' I have every intention of, and currently am, honoring them. And, no matter how many appeals Doug may send, I will continue to do so. The only 'scop' to Doug is that I am honoring them at current rates, regardless of the rate at which you may have paid. That is, each issue now costs EVERYONE postage plus printing. I will still absorb the piddling costs (white-out, paper, typer ribbon, labour, labels, etc., etc.), but I won't absorb or offset the two big ones.

((Third - there are some people whose copies come as trades or as complimentary copies. You will know this by the mailing code beside your address: X or C. Under those conditions, ignore Doug. These two categories are exclusively my problem. And also note: In the case anyone whose code is T or C, but who has also sent money, never fear; a record is being kept by me as well as by Doug, and you shall be repaid shortly.

((With that said, let's go on record as follows: From here on all is strictly according to the numbers. Doug now has everyone's status and/or sub balance. The information I've sent him directly corresponds to whatever appears on your address label. If 'X' or 'C', relax. If anything else, the numbers represent a total sub credit following the mailing of this issue. If you are below \$1.25 credit, you will not receive the next issue unless you re-subscribe.

((Of course, none of this takes into account one final category code: 'O'. This means 'orphan,' and may be equated to the legal profession's "pro bono publico." Or something like that. Anyway, if you are getting this rag because you are a player in a game I've taken on as an orphan, you may go back to the beginning of this discussion and ignore it entirely. I do not charge for orphans. And that is final.

((So. After we eliminate all those exceptions - if your sub is about to run out, please renew with Doug. From here on, any expirations will be dealt with directly from his address.

((PLEASE take note. Both of you....))

IN MEMORIAM

As I ready this issue, and type this final page, for the printer, I note in the newspaper the death at 64 of Jesse Unruh, former Speaker of the California State Assembly and late State Treasurer.

In the early 1960s I was an adamant opponent of "Big Daddy" Unruh. He reeked of political bossism, and represented to me and my leftist friends the ultimate in outmoded, "sell-out" politics. In a day of Democratic radicals, he was just a tad too moderate, too compromising.

Now, over twenty years later, he looms as the last true liberal in the Kennedy vision. Practically alone, he had the gumption to stand up to then-Governor Ronald Reagan concerning tuition charges for California's State Universities - and damned if Jesse didn't win!

There are other examples of his brazen independence. All are impressive. But for me, the ultimate came long before he was the all-powerful Democrat in California. It was 1962. I was a delegate to the State Convention of Young Democrats, in San Francisco. And there were two candidates vying for President of the State Young Democratic group. One was a Jesse Unruh "clone." The other was, as was I, a radical leftist, determined to put the excessively-moderate Kennedy/Johnson/Unruh camp in its place. And after a great deal of maneuvering and unsuccessful voting, I arranged to have my own name placed in nomination for State President. I had no qualifications whatsoever, but the nomination gave me a chance to address the 2,000-delegate floor with a speech.

I had a severe case of laryngitis, but I croaked my speech into the microphone: "This convention has a choice: It can vote for humanity and progressive ideals, or it can vote for the toady of Jesse Unruh!" The speech absolutely brought down the house, and in the subsequent voting I received an unprecedented 2.5% of the vote - the lowest total in the history of the organization.

To be sure, after all the preliminary votes were cast and all the 'silly' candidates had been eliminated, Jesse's candidate lost to the man I really was supporting, and on whose behalf I had run to hold some delegates: Phil Eisenberg, who is today a major political force in Sacramento County, California. But - over the years, one (or maybe both) of two things happened: Jesse liberalized, and/or I moderated. And as the years caused the Great Realignment, we came down to this: Yesterday, at the time of his death, Jesse Unruh represented for me one of only two remaining "Great Liberals" in California. (The other is Sen. Alan Cranston.)

Good-bye, Jesse. We who once opposed you for your moderation, but came finally to understand that your sensible consistency had it all over our immature unrealistic wildness, salute and honor you.

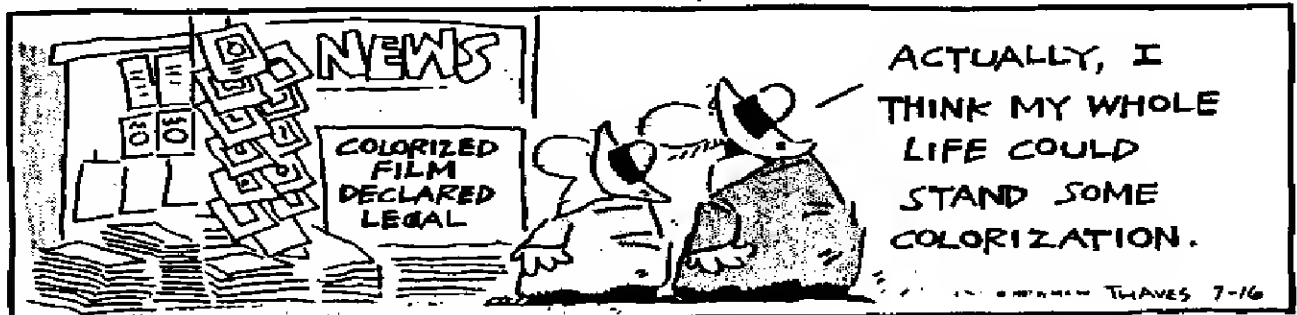
If you had died in 1962, I would have cheered. In 1987, I am saddened. And the change is all mine, and your example caused it.

Farewell - and thanks.

////////////////////////////////////

FRANK AND ERNEST

Bob Thaves



THE MAILBOX FILLETH

JULIE MARTIN: "If you print this, please do so in the same prominent position as YOUR editorial (p.3) - that is, of course, whenever you get around to publishing again. ((Aw, c'mon - I ain't that bad....))

The Joan Extrom Baby Poll for 1987 is over now...an unfortunate bit of silliness...quite unjustifiable, I think. I mean, who are these sick people, anyway, who would try to skew the results of a woman's pregnancy?

Having a baby is a lot of fun, but it has long since been agreed that it is not a joke; it involves an immense amount of work and expense on the part of its administrator, Joan Extrom, and the results are eagerly and carefully awaited by quite a few people. Why, then, would anyone make an effort to foul up the results by running a baby pool? I mean, don't you think Joan has enough pressure on her without the added demands of vultures who want her to have a baby on a particular day, of a particular sex and weight, at a particular time?

I have thoughtfully provided an analysis of the motivations of the such pondscum ((sic)):

1. Vindictiveness. "There are already enough children in the world." Your son Eric, who is already showing signs of political genius (if someone takes his lollipop, he pisses on theirs), is five years old. Who needs more kids?

2. Fear of losing. "I might not win the Pool, therefore I will arrange that my loss is meaningless." Joan better keep her doors locked at night.

3. Psychosis (and thus unfathomable). Why do the mentally ill do what they do? If we knew this, we might finally understand Conrad von Metzke.

(Pardon me if I skip the usual long, nauseating paragraph of fawning and toadying.)

No law exists - but by God, there should be one - committing any person who supports this pool. If you don't like what kind of baby Joan has, ignore it. That's fine. But to try and trouble and confuse her about her child? That's sick.

So what do you think, Dr. Conrad?

((Well, I think first of all that I have just met my match in the Satire Dept....

((The only qualm I have about the Joan Extrom Baby Pool - a fear which I failed to acknowledge previously - is the problem of favoritism. Up to a point, of course, a woman cannot control the details of her 'breeding' - I mean, if someone that Joan happens to like guesses a date fourteen months hence, there is no way that Joan can possibly accommodate this guess. Still, we all know that a woman can inject certain controls into her spawning; for example, had anyone been running a pool on Ross or Eric, we would simply not have gone out for pizza the night before each was born. (That's how Jean has babies: Get pregnant, wait nine months, then have pizza.)

((So what guarantees do we have that Joan won't skew the result by holding off, or speeding up, in order to match the guess of some friend of hers? No, I agree, Julie, I can't support this Poll either, unless I have some ironclad guarantees of fairness. Would you be interested in helping me appoint an Ombudaperaon, to be present at the birth and guarantee that delivery was accomplished at a "natural time" and not induced or otherwise skewed, e.g. by lack of pizza?

((Oh, and as to the issue of psychosis: Gosh, but you have a lot to learn. No amount of understanding is ever going to explain me! On the other hand, your statement held the ring of some minor truth, so I called my old friend Dr. Karl Menninger and explained the problem, and he did offer - for \$175 per hour - to undertake to explain my friends....))

ROBERT GREIER, JR.: "You did it again, you old dog, won the Rune-stone I mean. Congrats; as Bruce said, nobody does it better. ((Well, actually, that was Carly....)) I don't know that your low ranking in the GM poll was deserved, but then I'm just one low-life player....

((Deserved, hell! It was mandated! Honestly, what surprises me is that I wasn't lower; I mean, anyone who purports to be a Big Hobby Fixture and makes as many mistakes as I have lately, deserves to be called to account. See Don Del Grande's comments further on.))

"How about "Out to Pasture" #4 in the subzine poll? Derwood is quickly becoming a hobby "Bigwig." Sure hopes he still talks to us mortals, eh?

((Well, I dunno if he still speaks to you - as for me, there are two letters from him coming up....))

"How come you Californians are shooting one another over freeway space? I figure it's gotta be one of two things: (1) People are in too big a hurry. I'm sure with your job you see this all day, guy walks in, sees three people in line, and leaves, returning later so as not to have to wait. The real problem is we're all getting like that, we are in a hurry to get somewhere unknown to us, but we'll keep hurrying until we're there. (2) People are tired of getting aand in the face. Remember the ad, small guy gets fed up and 'takes care' of big guy? I honestly think people are tired of being cut off at the on-ramp, tired of watching the guy roll through the stop sign, tired of the red light runner. The "car bully" is an open-game species, and law enforcement officials are to blame. Unless the Chief of Police is present, patrolmen are known to look the other way at annoying violations. The guy who pulls out in front of you in the supermarket parking lot, the yellow light speeder, or even the old lady who does 20 in a 45 zone...and meanwhile, we the fairly honest motorists tire of the "car bullies," who remind us of the lunch line in school. They take our space in line because they know they can get away with it, and grow up thinking the world is their apple. Meanwhile, we have "matured," and realized that we have rights and weapons to stop the "car bullies." Our major weapon, the police - like the luncheon custodian - have more pressing problems to deal with than our petty quarrels, so they turn a deaf ear. We couldn't get a gun in school, but we can now, so people die. It's a sad commentary, but possibly a true one."

((In case any reader seems lost, Robert is referring to the fact that in the past couple of months, there have been at least a dozen incidents of 'freeway shootings' in Southern California, mainly over who gets to occupy which freeway lane at what speed; somebody is going slower than the guy behind, so the latter - instead of simply going around - pulls alongside and shoots the occupant of the slow car. All but one of these incidents have happened in the Los Angeles area; the exception was last week in San Diego. There have been four fatalities. The most tragic involves a young man and his girlfriend who were taking his son to the hospital; someone wanted to go faster, and instead of being rational, the lunatic pulled alongside and shot the father. Thus far, no arrests in this case have been made; however, in all of the other fatal shootings (and several of the non-fatal ones), suspects have been found.

((I have no idea what causes this kind of deranged behavior. There is some sort of sickness in the air, to be sure. And I must warn

you that I'm likely to be one of the next victims, because my poor old 1976 Dodge Colt simply will not travel faster than 50 mph. I mean, I stay religiously to the right lane, but even so I get a lot of honks and flashed lights....

((However, I must take sharp issue with you in the matter of the law enforcement people. In this part of the world, officers are scattered so thinly that they cannot possibly keep up with all the minor infractions that come up every ten seconds. Our local police have their problems, and I would be the last to suggest that they are perfect; but by God, they try their best, and I cannot fault some of their omissions when I understand that the main reason is mere lack of manpower. San Diego has an urban crime problem, just as every other metropolitan area does; but the fact that we are on the low end of the scale in almost all major crimes except those related to drugs (which has to do with our proximity to the Mexican border) says quite a lot for the local police. Well, maybe your situation is different; you're in a rural area, maybe your police are corrupt and only the Chief is honest. I don't know. I can only tell you that I wouldn't trade the San Diego Police Department for any other known to me. Occasional bad apples notwithstanding, they are excellent. And if I do wind up getting potted on the freeway by some loon, I assure you it will be far more the fault of my own strange driving habits than of the police around me.

((Oh by the way - per our conversation the other night, Fostoria, Ohio, is roughly 40 miles south-southeast of Toledo, on the road to Marion. It is less than ten miles back toward the lake from Findlay. You may wish to study the map of your own Buckeye State in order to orient yourself to the places in which my family lives or has lived. Other cities and towns of importance in my heritage (other than the "big cities") - Elyria, Wilmington, Ottawa, Middletown and Vienna. When you've fully absorbed the place of each of these locals in Ohio history, please advise and we'll discuss the matter some more. For instance: Did you know that in Fostoria, every single winter, it actually snows??))

DERWOOD BOWEN ((Hmm, Ohio is out in force today - and hearty congrats on your well-deserved standing in the Poll; betcha #2 next year!)): "I agree with you about Melinda's writing. It is funny that she doesn't do any of this for her own 'zine, but sends stuff like this to you. You must have some special appeal. ((Yeah....I have this way with cute women....)) Rod is mostly interesting, as is the debate on Christianity. I don't know how you can ever resolve such a debate, for Christianity is a matter of faith. You either accept it, or you don't. No amount of logic can ever refute or justify faith.

((True. Essentially, that's what Craig Mills and Doug Baker have said all along. Still, you can certainly have a field day dealing with the historic and sociological relationships....))

The little drug comment was interesting too. I have personally known people for whom drugs have been the ruin of their lives. I have not known a confessed alcoholic ((Hey! What about me?!)), though I believe I do know someone who is one. 'Recreational drugs' is perhaps the term you're looking for. Different drugs do different things. I don't know what of the propaganda I see and read is real, and what is merely designed to keep young people from getting involved. I would like to have the knowledge to give good answers. My personal experience is not a good arena from which to draw scientific conclusions. I have seen a lot of marijuana use, for instance; I have not seen anyone destroyed by it. I have seen

people done in my downers (especially in conjunction with alcohol). I have also met a burnout from acid and speed. I have seen what speed does to a person. Having seen these things first-hand, I appreciate what dangers these drugs hold. That is what makes the present drug rhetoric so difficult. I know myself that some drugs are dangerous. Are the people who tell us all these things are bad, telling us the truth now, or are they reacting like people did before?"

((A very fine set of questions and dilemmas. Perhaps we should let Mark Berch carry it from here.....))

MARK BERCH: In the business about drug abuse, I think you misunderstood me, and I suspect we agree far less than you think we do.

To recapitulate, you ran a stamp which was inscribed, 'Stop! Drugs are Suicide!' You called that "A message which needs broadcasting," and concluded, "That's an accurate comment."

No, it's not, I said, and gave a variety of arguments. You agreed with one of my major points, but then took me to task for viewing this in the wrong light: "The big problem with your argument...is that you treat my slogan, and Austria's propaganda, as an all-encompassing end unto itself. It's no such thing. It's an attention-grabber...I was merely offering a beginning statement intended to be appropriately expanded. Sloganeering can never be a whole answer; it is useful only as a focus."

Moreover: "COSTA has a fairly sophisticated audience" and would never take such a statement "as an end-all."

Yes, yes, I realize all this. Believe me, I understand what a slogan is. I'm one of those sophisticated COSTA readers, remember? But I think it's the wrong slogan, the wrong attention-grabber, the wrong beginning, call it what you will. In no sense would I call it "an accurate comment." I don't think it's "a message which needs broadcasting. As I said, such messages are, in my view, "more part of the problem than the solution." They ought not be broadcast. A slogan sets the tone. It grabs the attention, gives a glimpse of the goals, the mindset, the attitudes. I'm sure this is a gratifying slogan for those who are firmly opposed to any illicit drug use, and such a person may well be the person who wrote it. But to someone who hasn't made up his mind, or who does drugs but is thinking about the topic, it says 'Scare tactics,' 'Unreality,' 'Extremism.' Just the approach which hasn't worked for the last three decades. It's the same old stuff, the same overkill.

Suicide, or death by drugs, is only a tiny part of the problem. Drugs are different from AIDS. In AIDS, the linkage is legitimate; in drugs, it is a scare tactic. Even for heroin, the vast majority don't die and go to Hell; their hell, if it comes to that, is living.

Thus, I object to what was on the stamp because it's a terrible slogan. It reeks of unreality. I don't object because it fails as a be-all and end-all.

A slogan need not do that. "Drugs - an evil friend?" to my mind is much more useful. The question mark says, "Let's consider the question" - which can lead to a distinguishment among drugs. The dual nature of 'evil friend' catches the contradiction of drugs; they can be friends and they can be evil. It's a legitimate concern to the drug user - is the friendship worth the evil? That's the reality - not suicide, a minor part of the problem.

And we must stay real. In your letter, you refer to the San Diego school system distinguishing between legit drugs and "drugs offered on the sidewalk by a stranger." GET REAL! Kids in junior and senior high don't normally buy drugs that way, and if you present that image, you will be rightfully sneered at. Kids normally buy from their friends (at school or in their homes), often the same kids they will later do the drugs with. Strangers who approach school kids to sell drugs are likely to get busted rather quickly and are thus a minor part of the problem (people do sell drugs to strangers all the time, of course, but these circumstances generally arise where the buyer seeks out the seller). My point here is not the details, but the need to stay close to the reality of the situation.

((Well, gee - I guess you don't have much use for the cover of this issue, then, on which postage stamps of the United Nations are depicted displaying the slogan, "YES TO LIFE - NO TO DRUGS.")

((I guess you're right. We are worlds apart on this issue. I do not deny one single point that you make - Mark, you are absolutely correct in every single thing. But, in my view, you are so wrapped up in technical precision that you miss one essential point - NOT ALL PEOPLE ARE AS SOPHISTICATED AS YOU, or as the average COSTA reader. Stamps such as the Austrian one in question, and the U.N. one today, aim at a mass audience: I.Q.s from 0 to 200, life experience and general sophistication across the spectrum. Those who have detailed knowledge of the weaknesses of such sloganeering will legitimately question the precision of blanket statements such as, "Drugs are suicide" - because, of course, as you rightly point out, not all drugs are suicide, and not all suicidal drugs kill you - it's a matter of degree, of pattern of use, etc., etc. All heroin users die; but only a minority dies of heroin use. True. But this is hardly an argument for the use of heroin....

((The focus today is to bring awareness to drugs as a danger. And they are. Yes, of course, they are not all suicide, under all conditions; there are 'good' drugs and 'bad' drugs and drugs that have elements of both worlds. Your example of your brother-in-law's morphine "addiction" is a striking example of the latter. Another questionable example is my own recent experience; I pulled a muscle in my lower back, and went to see my physician for help. In so doing, I specifically reminded him that I was an alcoholic and did not want a prescription for anything that was even remotely addictive. So he gave me Motrin, which is quite moderate and my no means addictive, but I'll just betcha that if I took the whole bottle tonight I'd be dead tomorrow. This has nothing to do with 'street' drugs, but it does illustrate one point: "Good drugs can be suicide too!"

((Yes, your slogan suggestion is superb: "Drugs: An Evil Friend?" How about this: "Drugs: ASK FIRST!" Yours gives the dichotomy; mine provides the warning. They may be bad or good, but unless you ask first you'll never know. Shall we combine 'em? "Drugs: An Evil Friend? Ask First!"

((But no. I do not agree that we must be precise and technical in the world of attention-grabbers. Okay, let's make it "Drugs CAN be suicide." But I really do not think we need worry about being laughed at for making blanket statements that have incorrect elements associated with them. FIRST, let's get the attention. THEN, let's point out that there are exceptions, but that they need to be carefully evaluated by an appropriate professional. Nobody on earth, none but the pickiest, is going to be upset that we don't have enough room on a postage stamp to list all the fine print.

((Yeah, Mark, I guess we are worlds apart. I feel very strongly that backing off from generalities is far more useful to the masses than expanding from precision. The local schools have the same attitude as I: Snare the captive audience first, then analyze. We may lose a handful, those who insist on picky technicality; but at least we'll have the attention of most of the audience, since the analytical types are in such a minority.))

((Which reminds me. How come Rod Walker is listed as "Editor Emeritus," but neither I nor Jerry Jones is even mentioned? Well, okay, Jerry is gone now, but I swear I am as 'emeritish' as Rod; he may be more recent, but I was just as good....

/ / / / / / / / / / / / / / / / / / / / / / / / / / / /

Last issue, with the game report for RETURN J. MEIGS, I issued a challenge to identify W.W.I British battleships. Only Fred Davis bothered to respond, and he was misled by the poor wording of the question.

Let me now quote Fred Davis' answer (note, he did not try for Part Two):
 "1. The pre-dreadnought coast-defense battleship CANOPUS, which could only steam along at 13 knots. 2. This is a tricky one. Three pre-dreadnoughts were sunk or badly damaged here in the sweep up the straits. The first was the French Gaulcis...the others were the French Bouvet and H.M.S. Ocean, both of which were sunk. 4. A masterful question ((hah!)). The answer is H.M.S. Dreadnought herself. She was the only British BB not to fight at Jutland, having been detached to anti-submarine patrol in the Straits of Dover. The reason for this detachment was that Dreadnought carried no secondary armament whatsoever, which could have made her fair prey for enemy destroyers. (At first I was thinking of the seaplane carrier Engadine, although she was classified as a light

cruiser in those days. However, she would not have qualified in any case, since she did launch one scouting seaplane during the battle.)"

Well, Fred - nice try. Unfortunately, please note that in Part 3, I made no mention whatsoever of a ship being sunk or damaged; all I said was that it suffered some sprung plates (owing to its age) and had to drop out. And as to Part 4, there were quite a few British ships - also several German - that did not actually take an active part in the fight. They were there, to be sure, but never fired a shot - nor ever had a target to straddle.

The point was - and here was my misleading wording - that all four parts of my question refer to the SAME SHIP. Namely, H.M.S. Canopus, an early pre-dreadnought commissioned in about 1903. At Coronel, Cradock waited for its big guns; but, it was so slow (13 knots, as Fred says) that he finally gave up and engaged the enemy. After Cradock's squadron was destroyed, Canopus turned round and headed back around the Horn to the Falklands, where she was beached and her main gun dismounted and set up as a shore battery; it was that gun that fired the first shot of the Falklands battle, a signal volley to alert Adm. Sturdee to get his boilers stoked. After Sturdee demolished the German squadron, Canopus' gun was re-mounted and she was sent to the Dardanelles to assist in coastal shelling, but after a short while she had to put into Alexandria for repair of some leaky plates. Those having been fixed, she was seconded to the Grand Fleet at Scapa Flow, sailing proudly into battle in the van of the fleet at Jutland - and never came within a hundred miles of a German. After the war, of course, the old tub was scrapped. But Canopus carried two distinctions out of the fray: She was the only ship to have been involved in four separate naval battles of the war; and, she was the only ship to have been insignificant in all four.

/// /// /// /// /// /// /// /// /// /// /// /// /// /// /// /// /// ///

COUP D'ETAT

Simon Billenness has just announced that he is moving the Cline 9-Man variant out of these pages and into his own tender care. This is probably just as well, but I hope it is still understood that I will run game reports whenever I get them and it's still a COSTA game as far as I'm concerned. Not that this gives me any special "rights," and even if it did, I wouldn't invoke them. Simon is doing what's best for the players; he and I have been plagued by communications troubles all along (mainly my fault), and I think I'm reading correctly between his lines to see that one thing he is sick and is outrageous 'phone bills.

Please note - if any reader is subbing to or trading with COSTA precisely because of this game, please let me know and we'll work out a refund or cancellation.

/// /// /// /// /// /// /// /// /// /// /// /// /// /// /// /// /// ///

RANDOLPH SMYTH: Why am I still getting COSTA? I'm not complaining! - but I thought you were cutting out all the garbage trades like me.

Re: Health Care (last COSTA, p.23). It's true that Canada has a good system (in my opinion) of socialized medicine. But dentistry is certainly not covered, nor are such "frills" as plastic surgery; I don't think psychiatry qualifies either. If you can move your arms and legs without a lot of obvious pain, then you're healthy enough to join the workforce and pay taxes. And that's good enough for us.

((First of all - You were never a 'garbage' trade and you know it. Yes, I did announce a while back that all trades were cut; but very quickly, the financial picture re-brightened and the result has been that no trades have been cut off at all. I did eliminate about ten "deadwood" names; two trades that hadn't been reciprocating anyway, a few old subs that had effectively expired and from whom I hadn't heard a word. I also took steps to eliminate all 'mutual subs,' of which I had but two anyway. And I put a freeze on new trades, though I've already broken that one twice. But, though I didn't actually say anything, I figured most of you would get the message that I'd decided to keep trading anyway...as you and most others in fact did.

((As to medicine, the best systems in the world, from the standpoint of full medical services for all regardless of means, etc., are in Scandinavia. Sweden is of course often cited as a "cradle-to-grave welfare state," and that description (which isn't too far off the truth) certainly includes all medical elements. Denmark, Norway and Iceland have similar medical systems, though they are apparently not as comprehensive in other areas of life. In theory the Communist nations work the same way, though of course in most of those cases the result is simply poor care (or even no care) for all except the party elite. (I once read a comment by a British writer who insisted that over 98% of the people in Albania had unresolved dental problems, and there were in fact only five qualified dentists in the whole country - not one of whom had training in either oral surgery or orthodontics. And three of the five were elderly, having studied in Germany before the war. Now this is a lousy - and also irrelevant - example, Albania being the poorest and most backward nation in Europe and all; other Communist states have much better records. But the point is that the "best" medical service may not always be exactly that....

((My wife's godmother lives in Vancouver, B.C., and is getting old. Her medical needs are increasing of late. My parents-in-law live here, and are similarly old and increasingly infirm. It's kind of too bad they can't switch places, because Jean's godmother is quite well-to-do and has plenty of money to pay for medical care or comprehensive insurance; yet in Canada, she doesn't need it. My in-laws, on the other hand, have very little money to pay the Medicare deductibles, which - as procedures get more and more complex, cost more and more. I look forward to the day when the United States catches up to Scandinavia, or at least Canada - or even the Communist states; with our resources, we could take their de jure system and create a de facto one without compare.

((I'm not surprised, Randolph, that dentistry and plastic surgery are excluded. I'd bet, however, that certain elements of those sciences would be covered - that's the way it is here with most insurance plans - if certified 'medically required.' As an example, a man injured in an auto crash would probably have restoration of his teeth included as well as surgery etc. But to correct an unsightly overbite? I'd be curious what criteria are used to decide if psychiatric care is or is not included. Is it always excluded? Always included? Included only under certain conditions? Next time any Canadian reader has occasion to check out "CanadaMed," ask, will you, and let me know....

AND SPEAKING OF CANADIANS: Best wishes to Joe Zizek and Bob Acheson, that they and theirs escaped the ravages of the recent Edmonton tornado. If not, well...how was Oz, anyway?

MARK BENCH: ((Re: The Runestone Poll)) "I really don't see what the fuss is about listing the names of the voters. Big deal. What harm is there? If a person here or there doesn't vote because he disapproves of Policy X, what is the Pollster supposed to do - try to calculate whether doing Policy X will cause more voter loss than doing Not-Policy-X? Andy Lischett's letter failed to set forth any fundamental reason why the policy should affect the quality of the results, which is what matters. And if people feel that they have to agree with everything a hobby custodian does before they will cooperate, then, good grief, we won't have any hobby services! It is one thing to disagree, but to refuse to cooperate when the hobby custodian is doing the job as he sees best and is treating everyone the same, is being obstructionist. I ran into the same problem when I was running DipCon in 1982. One player told me he wouldn't play because he sharply disagreed with one aspect of the scoring system (a bonus for being on the top board). Another said that he would not cooperate in publicizing the tournament because the money was not being allocated according to the formula that he created. We've had publishers who have tried to hide their games from the BNC because of disagreements over this or that policy. This hobby has been built on the basis of cooperation!

((True, co-operation is what got us here, and it's what we need to survive. And in general I do not disagree with the thrust of your words. I would add only this: You are unquestionably right when it comes to assertions of policy or procedure that are mutually exclusive. In a tournament, you can have only one scoring system, and only one allocation of profits. But when it comes to an issue having multiple views which are not mutually exclusive, I wonder if there is any practical reason for adhering to only one side when both/all could be accommodated. In the case of listing by name all the Runestone voters, why is it not possible to 'swing both ways' at once? All voters will be listed by name and hobby affiliation, just as Bruce did this year, unless they specifically request anonymity; in such cases, legitimacy of the votes will be verified before inclusion, and documents will be retained for examination by anyone questioning such legitimacy; but the votes will still be counted and the voters listed as "anonymous by choice." Is this so bad, or unmanageable?))

"The 'Heaven and Hell' story ((by Vu Nhan)) does indeed read well, and Nhan writes well. I wonder if he's aware that this is an old Jewish story, Hasidic, about 200 years old. It exists in several forms. One version is of people who have no elbows, and thus can feed each other but not themselves. There is a distantly related army maneuver for sitting down when the ground is too wet. It requires that at least 18 men form a circle, each man facing the back of the next. Each then slowly sits down on the knees of the man behind him!"

((You'll forgive some condensation, but a couple of items in your letter were indecipherable. What the hell are "lon unintsels?"

((Anyway - anthropologists have been pointing out for years that certain parables or elemental stories are almost universal, just as linguists have found that certain words - based on early infant sounds - apply to most people, e.g. "mama," "dada," and certain expletives. As to the universality of some parables, there are many examples, and I might only mention Margaret Mead's studies in New Guinea, and Col. Van Der Post's work among the Bushmen, as readily-accessible but by no means isolated examples.

((But why the specific minimum of 18 men in the army thing? I understand that there is a minimum, but couldn't it be 15 or 17 as well? Why does the number 18 control - has someone done a study?))

SIMON BILLENNESS: ((Well, actually, this isn't a letter, it's a steal from Simon's new 'zine EXCITEMENT CITY, in which he both charms the pants off his readers and simultaneously makes a complete fool of himself))

"PRAXIS is going to win the Runestone Poll.

"Well, that's my prediction, for what it's worth. To be more precise, I want PRAXIS to win the Poll.

"I am not ashamed to admit that I prefer 'zines which generally adhere to my kind of left-wing politics. In fact, I tend to look down on 'zines whose editors espouse conservative views. PRAXIS is an exception to this.

"PRAXIS is a run-of-the-mill 'zine when it comes to contents. It contains game reports, plenty of press, house rules debates, occasional articles and more than a few letters. What lifts PRAXIS above the competent is Alan Stewart's writing. The man is articulate, intelligent and highly amusing. Sprinkled throughout each issue are veritable gems of wit. The letter column is a riot. I rarely read press, though I make an exception for the "Algoma" game. Maybe I just feel a kind of affinity for a fellow political science graduate. I pride myself on being both well-read politically and up-to-date on current affairs, but Alan's breadth defeats me. I bet when the miserable bastard skipped tutorials at college, he was in the library reading up for an essay....

"I've seen many predictions for the winner of the Runestone Poll, but in my view, BLUNT INSTRUMENTS is too new, HOUSE OF LORDS is too left-field and EUROPA EXPRESS is too dead. PRAXIS is the only logical choice now that COSTAGUANA has blotted its copybook with a few delays.

"I'm sure Alan would not mind a few extra subscribers. \$5 for ten issues to Alan Stewart, 702-25 St. Mary St., Toronto, Ontario, CANADA M4Y 1R2."

((Excuse me, sir, but what do you mean, "COSTAGUANA...blotted its copybook?" Need I remark another quote from this same page of yours: "Yes, I know, my first issue is late." We have a cliché over here, something about pots and kettles and the colour black....

((Still, I cannot disagree with your essay. I still think COSTA won on sympathy vote....

((You're right, Simon. PRAXIS is definitely the Conservative Exception to my usual preference of leftist 'zines in accord with my beliefs. I mean, my God! Robert Bork for Supreme Court? Alan has gotta be crazy - the man makes Attila the Hun look progressive! But somehow, the reasoned and literate way Alan presents it...he's still full of hokey, but at least he's cohesive! Contrast his reasoned, albeit wrong, views with those of Bork's other "articulate" defenders: Hatch; Helms; Simpson; Ronnie himself; and, of course, the Klan....

((But your review and commentary says something beyond a mere plug for PRAXIS. It says a lot about you, sir, and your new effort from which I stole the above. EXCITEMENT CITY UNLIMITED is just about to become the newest in Great 'Zines. Peter Sullivan says I can't give a bad review; true, but I can give none at all. Your 'zine deserves one of the strongest reviews I've given in ages. At this rate, next year in the RUNESTONE, you can go right ahead and rave about PRAXIS all over the place, but in so doing you'll be competing with yourself.

((Simon can be found at 630 Victory Blvd., #6-F, Staten Island, NY 10301. Three open games: Cline-9 (I'm playing in this game that I helped invent), Stab and Downfall (in which I'm also playing). Get involved!

((In fact, I hereby make the following offer. Send me a postcard requesting a sample of either PRAXIS, or EXCITEMENT, or both. Preferably both. Every two weeks, I will mass any such requests and arrange to have the samples sent - entirely at my expense! Both 'zines are worth it; it saves you money, and makes me feel good. So do it, eh?))

And we move now to pure plagiarism....

BRUCE LINSEY: "I appreciated your support for my decision to discount the bribe-induced zeroes cast for Dick Martin's 'zine. But, you neglected to mention a fairly important point: That I wrote to each of the voters and told them I'd extend the Poll deadline to allow them to recast the questionable vote. Most of these people are novices who are innocently involved in Dick's scheme, so I felt I should accomodate them to whatever extent possible.

((Sorry, you're right that that was a major omission, and I can only plead that I wrote my supporting essay in haste at the tail end of production. The record stands corrected.))

"Also please allow me to correct one error in your analysis ((of the Poll)). Contrary to what you printed, I did do quite a bit of pleading with people for their ballots, more than ever before. In fact, mostly due to the Canadian postal strike, I even called a few people (read: about a dozen) this year. The point, though, is that I see absolutely nothing wrong with the pollster actively working to increase the turnout, any more than it's "wrong" for Diplomacy World's editor to actively seek articles, e.g.

((No, I see nothing wrong either. I was factually wrong, but it really doesn't matter operatively. As long as your arm-twisting and 'phoning doesn't involve an effort to sway the result, and I know very well it didn't this year, I cannot see an argument against the efforts. Hell, I made a couple of calls and wrote a few letters urging ballots, and that could very easily be seen as an attempt to swing the result; these were COSTA people, after all. And let's go one step further; you mention, in THE CREAM SHALL RISE (review later this issue), that I "helped" the Poll by sending out the ballot twice! Well, of course it probably garnered a few more votes for the Poll - but can you imagine what it did for COSTA's score as well? I'll just betcha that the second mailing was what pushed me over the top...now, is that ethical? I dunno. I do recall that the 1985 solicitation campaign you did was called into question because you happened to win that year. Didn't bother me, I know full well you weren't soliciting only automatic VOICE OF DOOM votes - and I can prove it, you 'phoned me (it was the first time we'd ever spoken, and also the first time I'd even heard of you) to get my vote, and of course having never seen V.O.D. I couldn't possibly cast a vote for it. But whatever the issues in 1985, they certainly have nothing to do with 1987. Apologies are again in order for the factual glitch, but nothing is changed thereby.))

"Finally, PRAXIS is of course a tremendous 'zine, and if Alan keeps up his current quality for another couple of years it will become one of the finest 'zines of all time. But let us not get carried away. The hobby would survive perfectly well without PRAXIS, or any other specified 'zine. Mind you, it would be greatly missed. But I think you overdid the hyperbole just a little bit there, eh?

((Well...er...no, actually, I think you're full of shit on this one, Brux. Please keep in mind who wrote that hyperbole. And then call to mind the values that make this hobby worth the effort for me. It is necessary in this connection that you read between the lines a bit; I grant you, on the surface, what I wrote is ridiculous, but again - remember who wrote it. For me, this hobby is made up almost entirely of the "reading" 'zines put out by the people whose intellects I respect and admire. PRAXIS is, for me, the epitome of that genre. Without it, the genre would be badly weakened. And without at least a couple of quality representatives of the genre, the hobby would surely die - at least for me. Okay, for hobbywide distribution, don't quote me. But I kid you not; get rid of PRAXIS and two or three others of its ilk, and I will be leaving with them. And that is the message I tried to convey. If it came across overblown, well...so what? That's how I feel.))

DERWOOD BOWEN: I read the last COSTAGUANA, and can honestly say I mostly enjoyed it. There was only one thing that bothered me about the last issue. That was your comments on the Runestone Poll.

Now, given that Brice Linsey has engendered his share of acrimony in the hobby, and that the Poll was used in the past to attack Bruce, I can understand that any hanky-panky with the Poll might be seen as another shot at Bruce. However, your automatic assumption that this is the case is, in my opinion, unfair. I don't speak for Dick Martin. I am not writing in his behalf. What I am writing for is to object to the way you dealt with this. You wrote that you could think of only three possible reasons for doing what Dick did, and you listed them. If indeed these were the only three, you might well be right in venting your spleen. I see at least one other possibility, which is in keeping with Dick Martin's personality. Dick doesn't take a lot of things too seriously, and I suspect the Runestone Poll is one of those things. To my way of thinking, Dick was doing this because he does not consider the Poll as something to be taken seriously. I do not see where pulling the stunt that Dick pulled would ruin the Poll. In fact, given that Dick's little stunt is public knowledge, I don't see where any harm is done at all. Of course, if one considers the Poll as a sacred cow, then anything done to tamper with its purpose is a diabolical scheme. Well, the Poll is not a sacred cow! Our hobby is founded on fun, and I see what Dick did as a prank and nothing more. It is certainly no worse than faking a 'zine, in my opinion. It certainly was not a serious effort to manipulate the Poll.

I hope my objections can be seen in the light in which they were intended. I am not out to make enemies, but only to get you to look at another viewpoint. Don't take things so seriously! Certainly not hobby matters. Polls, I thought, were done for fun. I must be wrong.

((No, of course you aren't wrong, 'fun' is the principal product of this hobby, and of any of its institutions - at least I hope so. The trouble is, and this is why Dick's activities annoy me - the Poll has a second purpose, and that is information. Now, I dunno; maybe if I hadn't been a top contender in the Poll these past two years, I wouldn't care so much. I cannot be objective. But I have, ever since the Poll was instituted eleven years ago, looked to the results to see what the hobby was really thinking. I very much like to know what they think of my work, and of everyone else's. As but one example: This year I came out first in the 'Zine Poll, but a rousing 44th in the Gamesmaster Poll. That tells me that I run a great 'zine and handle games like a pig, and because of these results, I shall spend the next year trying to to a better job as a GM. Players, after all, deserve it.

((And did you notice? Last issue the reading material was quite possibly the weakest in living memory - still good, but not spectacular? However, there was only one mistake in the game reports, and that one was caused by a misread of an attempt to 'fake' standby orders in RATHER SILLY. The point is, last time, for the first time, I actually gave preference in amount of effort to games over reading material. And it was the Runestone Poll that did it for me.

((Maybe that's good, and maybe it's bad. Maybe I take the results too seriously. But it does seem to me that the hobby has a right to render its views, and have them seen in a valid light, without having some 'prankster' screw up the result and give those of us who are really trying a misleading picture. Let's carry this one step further. Suppose, instead of urging his readers to vote him a zero, Dick had instead urged his readers to vote me a "10" as a GM. A prank? Maybe. But 44th place made me realize my biggest weakness; if someone's 'prank' had vaulted me into, say, 10th place, I doubt I'd have noticed my problem.

((Yes, of course, the whole point is fun. But fun for its own sake (your example of faking a 'zine) is one thing; causing problems to others who work very hard is quite another. I think we must consider the distinction.))

PETER SULLIVAN: "C'EST MAGNIFIQUE one of the 'giants' of the U.K. hobby? Well, I don't think so, and more importantly, neither does the rest of the hobby according to the ((U.K.)) Zeen Poll. Still, I'd be interested to see Derwood Bowen's comments. ((Me too - where are you, Der?)) His reviews in LIFE OF MONTY have convinced me he's not one of those people (like you, or for that matter me) who can't bear to give a zeen a bad review.

((Oh, hey, Pete, wait just a moment. I can so give a 'zine a bad review. I just don't do so - if a 'zine deserves a negative, I simply don't mention it at all. Why should I give space to something I have no liking for? Now, to be sure, I don't normally go so far as to warn people off (I learned about 'warning off' from your eminent mystery writer, Dick Francis) unless there is something unscrupulous or nefarious that needs to be communicated.

((Okay, so the damned Zeen Poll didn't do you justice. I'm sorry. I really do feel - and I still feel - that C-MAG got badly short-shrifted. You are reliable; you are chatty, and fun about it; your games are managed quite competently; and we who read the thing look forward to seeing it every time. Now, what the hell more can we ask of zines? Okay, I admit, your mimeo is a bit weak; either your typer isn't cutting the stencils properly, or your machine needs a full cleaning. But no matter. It is EXCELLENT. Now, I accept that unless and until you can afford to go photo-reduced digest the way Glover (e.g.) has done, you'll never hit the top three; have you noticed that, regardless of content, the top three in any poll always involve impeccable printing? But Peter, my friend, I would not trade C-MAG for all the tea in China, or even Boston Harbour. I'll be glad to take bets on your much-improved standing next year...and so, I know full well, will several others.))

"The other day I came across a couple of issues of DIPLOMACY WORLD for 1975, which had been hidden away...in the vaults of the Durham University Games' Society. They made fascinating reading! All the 'hobby projects' then active seem to have their modern equivalents: novice packets, ratings, archives, etc. Truly there is nothing new under the sun. Why, there is even a piece by a Mr. Rod Walker bemoaning that Conrad von Metzke took on too much and was currently burnt-out. So for heaven's sake, keep COSTA within manageable limits, and don't go away again, you hear? Or at least not for a long time...."

((Ah yes...1975. Peter Sullivan still in swaddling clothes and Uncle Connie burned out yet again. The year I married Jean.

((No, Peter, things won't go back to that level. You must keep in mind, though of course you've never been told, that in the 1972-1975 period I was publishing up to six magazines, and was Boardman Custodian, Orphan Games Honcho, Miller Custodian (briefly), and even editor (and for one issue, Publisher) of DIPLOMACY WORLD. I was working out a personal trauma; in the summer of '72 my father died and my first wife and I separated. I needed something. Diplomacy was it. Eventually, of course, the trauma receded and I started giving away all the things I'd been doing: DW to Jerry Jones, the Miller Nos. to Burt Labelle, the Orphan Project to Greg Warden, and the BNC (at his behest) to Doug Beyerlein. And, gradually, the 'zines wound down or folded up; only COSTA remained, and it finally died in 1978. At that point I left the hobby for six years, retaining contact with only two people: Fred Davis and Rod Walker. Then, in the summer of '83, Doug and Marie Beyerlein renewed contact, came to visit, and in the course of the afternoon Doug made the serious mistake of opening his big fat mouth: "I hope you never get back in the hobby, Conrad," or words to that effect. I took them to heart, and three months later COSTA was reborn.))

FRED DAVIS: Congratulations on your top finish in the Runestone Poll. You certainly deserved it. ((Well....)) When I spoke with Larry Peery on the results of the votesm he said he had the results too but, since they were going to be published in DIPLOMACY WORLD around Aug. 1st, he didn't think he should release them to me yet for BUSHWACKER. ((Too bad; he must have thought he was holding a "scoop" that in fact he didn't have at all. At least ten 'zines released the results before that date, probably more; and in fact Bruce's own THE CREAM SHALL RISE was distributed before DW.))

I thought your comments...re: the attempt to sabotage the Runestone Poll were terrific. You hit the nail on the head, especially "vindictiveness." I heard Dick Martin telling some other people, with great pride in his voice, how he had 'fixed' Linsey, or words to that effect. Martin would apparently do ANY-thing to hurt Linsey, including cutting off his own nose to spite his face. I'm sure that's the main reason he allowed Julie to take the "MNC/Covenant" post."

((Hey, wait a moment! It's 'Women's Lib' day, friend! Now, how do you know that Julie didn't just stick her nose into the fray entirely on her own? I mean, women are just as capable of causing useless trouble as men....

((I have no idea what motivates people to try and wreck a perfectly good hobby project - it would seem to me that, if they don't like someone else's work, they could go do some other work of their own, and if they aren't willing to do that, they could at least have the common courtesy to shut the hell up. Now in Sacks' case I have no problem; he has spent every single year of his hobby career causing trouble, and things are now to the point where nobody is in the least fooled. I think it says something for his discernment of the hobby mood that I have received, over the past three years, at least a dozen mailings from Sacks. Not once have I opened a single one of them; they've gone, still sealed, straight into the trash. And yet the damned things keep coming! - I got one about a week ago. Good grief, does he still suffer from the delusion that anybody cares in the slightest?

((But Dick and Julie are quite another matter. Both are sensible, sane, quality people. I barely know Julie - my first acquaintance with her is through her smashing satire a few pages ago - but Dick is unquestionably a brilliant writer, a fine publisher, and an excellent gentleman whom I am quite proud to know. "Toadying?" No, Julie, it's just that your husband is a pleasure to know, and I hope I maintain the pleasure for a long while.

((So why this one blind spot - rather, two; the Poll and the MNC bit? Hell, I dunno. Maybe Dick finds hobby institutions laughable, never mind that many of us think there's a real value to them. Derwood Bowen's interpretation will follow shortly, and he may be right. Maybe I was right all along, Fred; Dick doesn't like Bruce, therefore he's going to play vindictive no matter how destructive. Maybe also thus the MNC bit; why on earth anyone should spend their time trying to muck up an area that is crying out for cohesion is beyond me, but...well, some people have unusual ways of gaining pleasure. I guess you and I and the rest of the sane types are just going to have to work a bit harder to keep variants going in rational form.

((You will recall that I recently sent out a letter endorsing Fred Hyatt's position and denouncing Julie's. Let me suggest now another possibility: Forget this whole silliness. Let Sacks and his hangers-on stew in their own juice. Only a very few people, mostly newcomers, are actually on the fence; let's set up an "underground pipeline" (if necessary) to keep track of who they are, and set them straight when the issue arises. Beyond that, let's ignore this idiocy. To keep abreast, all we need to do is set up trades or 'phantom' subs; I would help, but despite faithfully sending Dick trade copies all along, I haven't seen an issue from him in three months. What's up, Dick? Did you fold? Too busy trying to cock up the 'Runestone' to honor your trades?))

ANDREW GREELEY: ((Well, actually, this isn't a letter either, it's an excerpt from Fr. Greeley's latest novel, 'Virgin and Martyr' - specifically, from the introduction:)) "None of the persons, institutions, events or organizations is based on a real-life counterpart. All are products of my imagination, save for the imaginary latin American country of Costaguana, which, as readers of 'Nostromo' will recollect, was imagined by Joseph Conrad."

((Just thought you'd like to know that my 'zine does not exist entirely in a vacuum. Fr. Greeley's novel is c.1985, implying that someone, at least, is still reading the great Conrad novels....))

DON DEL GRANDE: 'The Runestone Poll - Don't worry about the CM ratings; remember, I finished last for two consecutive years (of course, I deserved it back then). Anyway, you're right about the inevitable flak concerning the decision not to count votes of zero for RETALIATION. How can Bruce possibly know which, if any, of the zero votes legitimate (RETALIATION is a far cry from the 'good old days,' and most of the 1986 issues were done with a virtually unreadable Imagewriter), and which ones were done solely at Dick's request? ((Well, that's been answered by Bruce having provided, some pages back, the "major fact" I omitted - Bruce asked each zero voter to confirm or deny the zero.)) And what about Peter Sullivan giving THE HOME OFFICE a zero and admitting that he did it, not because it deserved a zero per se, but because he considered it the least favorite of the American 'zines he receives and gave ratings to assure that the preference matrix, which he favors, is accurate?

((Good points. I wonder if perhaps it isn't about time to toss out an idea, namely a suggestion to the Poll Custodian to include some paragraph with the ballots trying to indicate the intent of the 0-10 'matrix.' As a rough and highly tentative first idea, how about this:

((Please rank each 'zine which you receive on a scale of 0 to 10. You may define these parameters any way you see fit; the intent of the scale, however, is that a '10' represents the finest possible product of the hobby at this time, and '0' represents the worst. Numbers in between are intended as relative expressions against the extremes. While you are not bound by this definition, it is probably true that your ballot will be more in keeping with the hobby norm if you approach it in approximately this way." Now of course that's too wordy, but do you think perhaps a revised version of the gist of it would be useful? It might even be worth adding a clause such as: "It may be that no 'zine you vote for achieves either extreme. Remember, it is not intended that a '10' represent the best magazine you receive, nor a '0' the worst; rather, you may wish to rate each 'zine you receive against your own definition of "worst possible" and "best possible," given that there may be better or poorer efforts that you do not read." Or, again, some less verbose version of that sentiment. The point I am trying to make is that, without compelling any voter to adhere to it, and while still permitting individual interpretation, it might be useful to set a rough standard approximating the result the Poll is trying to achieve. Such guidance would serve the novitiate voter, who may not be all that clear on the true intent of the 0-to-10 spread - I have heard from more than one new voter that they felt they were expected to cast a maximum of eleven votes, ranking them in order: One ten, one nine, one eight, etc. - while, if properly worded, not misleading in any way the experienced voter who knows exactly what the Poll intends to achieve. Thoughts, anyone?))

"Second, Chris Greaves' response to Cal White and the formation of the Drop-Out Halfway House: What about publishing dropouts? I lost about \$20 to Roy Henricks, who for some strange reason suddenly refused to answer my - or anybody else's - letters. (He mentioned something about finding a long-lost (perhaps unknown) relative, but he could have said something to us!) And there

are also the dropouts who were "questionable" in the hobby - remember the last days of BLACK FROG? How many people are going to suggest that Jack Masters not be "welcomed back?"

"However, there are always people who can be saved. I can come up with someone who started his first game in LIFE OF MONTY ((Don's own superb 'zine)), only to get bored with Diplomacy and drop out, although I have heard he has regained interest in the hobby - Kenny Gestiehr Jr., son of Ken Sr.

((I would think that the two most classic examples of dropouts who have come back to (ahem) 'glory' are Rod Walker and myself. And, in England, Nick Shears stands out as well. In the case of publishers, I would offer this criterion: Welcome back if you are willing to make whatever amends are possible at this point - a kind of paraphrase of one of the steps of the A.A. program. But I mean it sincerely: Before a publisher should be welcomed back to try again, there ought to be some good-faith cleaning-up of any lingering debts, etc. I did this with COSTA in 1984. Nick has done it in the U.K. Rod fixed his prior messes. But had we not done, I would think that we would hardly be eligible for Chris' "welcome back" rehab program.))

"Re: Melinda Holley's letter: Here's a quote I found in THE PEOPLE'S ALMANAC: "(T)he people can always be brought to the bidding of the leaders. That is easy. All you have to do is tell them they are being attacked, and denounce the pacifists for lack of patriotism and exposing the country to danger." Hermann Goering said that.

"Speaking of THE PEOPLE'S ALMANAC (all three editions), each one has a chapter of predictions for certain dates. One of these, made in 1975, was: "Before 1980, there will be mass murders, a kind of genocide, in South America." (The same person predicted that doctors would join ranks with faith healers by then.)"

((It's worth noting that "mass murders" and forms of "genocide" have been alleged on every continent on earth except Australia in recent years. One assumes the alleged 'prophet' turned cartwheels of joy when he learned about the People's Temple business, but he might just as well have said Asia and gloated about Cambodia (and other spots), or Africa and Burundi and Nigeria, or North America and the Mexican and Guatemalan Indians, or Europe and...well, okay, maybe not Europe. Anyway; I've often felt that these people who make predictions are just peppering the world with possibilities - carefully worded to sound specific when in fact they're very general - and then making a big publicity thing out of the few that in one way or another "come true." The best of the prognosticators are probably very astute students of trends and cycles in the world, but still, I'd think that almost anyone could make a list of a hundred "predictions" and hit a few of them. The rest is p.r.

((Goering was right, of course, the more so in an unstable or troubled environment, but right nevertheless. That's really just his wording of his colleague Goebbels' "Big Lie." Or to put it another way, you can lead a horse to water, and in fact you can make him drink, and it's done all the time.))

PAT JENSEN: "Since you brought up religion, I have a few questions that I would like answered. (For a religion, I'm indifferent at times, at other times I find myself trusting in a God; what religion, I don't know, probably a mixture of all I have been exposed to.) What is the Bible? If it is God's word, why is there a New Testament? It is interesting to note that the Old Testament, based on "an eye for an eye" and other such sayings, was written by leaders of that time who wanted control. The New Testament is based on "love your neighbor" and was written by outcasts, not having the power to 'force' their ideas on others. The other question is, the ever-popular, WHY GOD?"

"Well, there are my questions. I don't plan on arguing either point, I'm curious as to what other people think about it. One more question: How important is religion to you? Which is more important, the values or the religion? Just something to chew on."

((("Just a couple of questions," eh? Only the largest of all possible questions! I'm personally in no position to be discussing the whys of New and Old Testaments, so I'll have to leave that point to others. As to Why God?, I would first suggest that the answer only matters if there isn't one. If there is, who cares why? I am reminded of one of those stories that makes the rounds of college campuses, about the student who earned an 'A' in his philosophy class with one stroke of the pen. The final exam contained one essay question: "Why?" The 'A' student's complete answer was: "Because."

((If there is no God, or perhaps also if we allow that it could be an open question, then there are many possible "why" answers. Without a God, mortality becomes a dreadful prospect. Now that I've passed the halfway point of my projected life span, I admit to some very deep-seated fears; I think this is a major element of what we've come to call "mid-life crisis," the recognition that I have less time to live than I have already lived, and inasmuch as I just happen to love living, it bothers me. Most philosophers of whom I know, and who comment on this sort of thing from a non-theological standpoint, usually refer to human deep-seated needs to assure order and continuity and purpose, i.e. to "know" for themselves that it isn't all a biological fluke. It's all well and good to talk about living on through one's children and their children, or even to having helped others to a good life via example and works and maybe even organ donations, but if one's own life is only a biological function, then so are lives of those through whom we live on, and that makes the whole shooting match just one larger emptiness. Please note that this is not necessarily how I feel; this is simply an off-the-cuff blurb designed to throw out some ideas. Probably there are a million possible answers or speculations. But I would leave you with this one more thought: Either there is a God, or else all questions about "why" are really just academic exercises in a sea of insignificance. Aren't they?

((I am in a very deep personal state of flux on the question of religion at this time. I am not yet prepared to deal with it in print. Not that I'm ashamed or hiding; I just feel very inadequate at this turning point. I will certainly say that I do not believe in "flashes from Heaven" making the unbeliever instantly a full member of the flock; at least not for myself. I think each person has been endowed with an individual manner of coming to grips with the Ultimate, and I don't think this violates anyone's perceptions of God and of His plan. Maybe this individuality is the plan. And I must also confess that I have my doubts about some of the "blinding flash" stories we hear from time to time; I'm not talking here about so-called 'miracles,' but rather about such things as the mass-murderer who, on being sentenced to death, suddenly "finds God" - and either uses that to bolster his appeals, or perhaps uses it to help himself into the Ultimate Unknown. No doubt some of these conversions are sincere, but - cynic that I am sometimes - I do wonder.))

DOUG BAKER: "It's interesting to read the continuing discussion on how to interpret the Bible or how much of it to accept, or whether to accept it at face value. What Craig has written pretty much speaks for me. I am not much into debating the details, however. In my opinion, if Jesus did not really come back to life, then all the arguing in the world about what he said or meant will not matter one fig. On the other hand, if He is alive today, then He is perfectly capable of making the truth clear to anyone who sincerely seeks to know it. This is not to say that either Rod or myself must be insincere, only that we do not know everything yet.

"Although I am a computer programmer by profession, and I make my living by reasoning and by logic, yet I would certainly not say that reason and logic are the only means or even the primary means by which I seek to know the truth.

Certainly we can imagine that there is truth which goes beyond our understanding. This does not mean that I cast aside reason and logic. It just means that I recognize that my reasoning is pretty limited and that I can access the truth by other means than reason alone."

((Well, as they often say, religion is a personal thing, between you and "God as you understand Him," to paraphrase from the twelve steps of A.A. And there is not, to my knowledge, any possible argument with your statement that there are more ways to get to truth than through logic and reason. Sometimes, in fact, logic is the worst tool, or won't work at all. The "truth" that I love my wife and sons is not arrived at by reason or logic or any combination; the explanation of it may be, but not the fact of it.

((May I throw in, as an aside, that I don't agree with your assertion that discussions of Jesus' meanings, etc., have no meaning unless Jesus is actually alive. In some senses, of course, you're quite right; if we're talking about the path to salvation, the way-truth-light and such, then yes, a non-living Jesus means nothing. But Jesus is/was much more; he was an advisor, a prophet, a counsellor, a visionary - and the examples of his life and the direction given by his words are very valuable commodities even if they were only confined to this life. I have heard it said many times that it is perfectly possible to lead a Christian life without being a Christian; that may seem like a contradiction in terms, but it can have a meaning if we understand that we speak only of mortal life on earth. I have also heard it said that one can be a Christian without leading a Christian life, and I find this one much more difficult to accept except in terms of the everlasting. My point is really just this, though; there is much more to Jesus than just salvation. You may argue or dispute all you wish, and you may be right; but I would say that if Jesus were only salvation, and absolutely nothing else, then the Bible would be much longer than it needs to be. How about this for the complete, unexpurgated text of the salvation-only Bible:

"I say unto you, through me there is everlasting life. Without me there is not. And all ye who seek, shall find. Amen."

((No flippancy, by the way, is intended.))

PETER SULLIVAN: "Rod's article was thought-provoking. I'd consider myself a Christian of somewhat loose standing. My main problem with traditional Christian dogma is the concept of 'hell,' which strikes me as being totally incompatible with the idea of a loving God. To take an example from another COSTA discussion, if anyone 'deserves' to be in hell, Adolf Hitler would. Yet I personally would not want to see him suffer for eternity for a crime, of whatever enormity, committed in finite time. (I know some other readers might disagree.) But if a fairly cynical student can wish forgiveness, surely a loving God would forgive even more?

"As I see it, traditional Christian thought would say that, if you ask to be forgiven, God will forgive you, whatever your sins. But why should someone who does not have the opportunity to repent 'between the stirrup and the ground' suffer for an otherwise blameless life? My ideas at this stage are still confused, but this seems wrong to me. Not that I have any problems with the idea of a loving God; that seems the only rational explanation for the existence of us all."

((Your remarks on Uncle Adolf, though an extremely tough nail to bite, really hit the essence of a 'loving, forgiving God' as He must be in order for Him to really be, if you will, of any use. I am in complete agreement with your ideas, Peter; I might even suggest that a God of any other stripe might just be one that I would rather not have exist....))

1273 crest dr

encinitas ca 92024

18 july 1987

Dear Conrad:

In case anyone is wondering at my protracted silence in the hobby (for the most part), let me hasten to assure all that it's not burn-out (again). I believe most people know I have a large (about 150K words) historical novel in progress. I'm something short of half-done with the "first" draft, which I hope to have completed by the end of the year. I say "first" because much of the ms. is already in final or near-final form. However, I'm fortunate enough to be getting some professional advice from a friend who's a well published author, helping me to avoid certain editorial pitfalls. The final text may turn out differently than I have it now owing to his suggestions. -- Anyway, I'm devoting so much of my time to writing, entering onto the computer, and editing that there's very little time for much else. I decided to dedicate at least part of this weekend to catching up with some correspondence, as I've hit a slow part of the narrative which I want to think about a while before continuing.

Hence this reply to Craig Mills. I trust Craig will find his life changes less disruptive than he anticipates, so that we'll hear from him again. His view is one we still find in much of the many-splintered Church, of absolute truth contained in an infallibly true document. This has long been opposed by a "skeptical" view (if we can lump many diverse opinions together), which essentially holds the Gospels (for instance) to be fables with little historical basis. A more modern approach (which I've used to prepare for writing A Death in Jerusalem) is to attempt to salvage the historical core of the narrative. There are many intellectual tools available for this task: textual analysis, structural analysis, and so on. This process can reach a nadir, as it did about 1900, in which the analyst feels there's very little left in the core. A wonderful (if somewhat tedious) discussion of the course of Gospel criticism from the Age of Enlightenment to the end of the 19th Century can be found in Albert Schweitzer's 1906 Von Reimarus zu Wrede (published in English as The Quest of the Historical Jesus). Most of the major problems with the received text appear in this hugely detailed book, but not (usually) any real solutions.

Solutions come about by dealing with an elaborate set of logic problems. Let me give you a relatively simple example, which will in turn touch on the question of the "resurrection" narratives. Jesus is represented as telling his disciples -- forcefully, repeatedly, and in plain language -- that he is going to be executed, and that he will "rise" on the third day afterward. Yet the disciples behave as if they'd never heard any such thing. Their reactions when Jesus is arrested, when he is executed, and when his tomb is found empty are, on all occasions, confusion; in two of them, panic.

The Gospels offer a lame explanation for this improbable behavior: the disciples hadn't understood what they were being told. That simply doesn't square with the very plain language Jesus is said to have used when telling them. The ridiculousness of the "explanation" is made even more clear by another improbable story inserted into Matthew. According to it, even Caiaphas was aware of these predictions. He took them quite seriously (it says here), to the extent of posting a guard to prevent the followers of Jesus from stealing the body and then claiming he'd "risen from the dead". If the disciples didn't get the message, how come Caiaphas did? ¶ (The improbable nature of the "guards" story is clear on the face of it. The guards supposedly witness the "resurrection" event, and report it to Caiaphas. The High Priest does nothing about this prodigy except to bribe his guards to lie about it. That is one of the clumsiest fabrications I've ever seen.)

Clearly, then, one of the two elements in the story is false. Either Jesus didn't predict his own death/resurrection, or the disciples were not frightened/confused by the events which their Master had predicted. Which seems more probable? The reactions of the Apostles these Founders of the Church in a bad light; too, they are clearly more human and natural. The non-event in these narratives, therefore, is most probably the predictions. (My own choice is more narrowly focussed. If Jesus predicted his execution only, the Apostles' reactions would probably still have been what they were. The most obvious non-event is the "prediction of resurrection".)

I find Craig's discussion of the "resurrection" narratives puzzling. The notion that the Bible is absolutely true comes from the idea that it is entirely and always from the single omniscient viewpoint of God. Craig, however, seems to accept the considerable inconsistencies and simply explain them by means of "different points of view". That sounds sweetly reasonable, but it ain't. The initial problem is that all four Gospels have trial-and-crucifixion narratives which are remarkably consistent with each other (even John, the "bad boy" of the four). The minute we pass into the parts

about the "resurrection", however, this consistency disappears, and is replaced by the contradictions and other difficulties Craig admits. If the "different viewpoint" explanation is at the root of the problems in the "resurrection" narratives, why don't we see this same problem to the same degree in the immediately preceding (and presumably connected) sections? The answer is, of course, that the "resurrection" narratives are later additions to the collections of materials that form the bases for the Gospels. The relatively more consistent crucifixion narratives stop with the discovery of the empty tomb, and then the real problems begin.

In fact, the question of these passages is far more vexed and difficult than Craig's easy disposal of it would seem to indicate. Whole books are devoted to the problem -- e.g. Pheme Perkins' scholarly but unfortunately a bit too apologetic Resurrection. Just a few of the difficulties:

¶¶ The last part of Mark (16:9-20) is not by the author of Mark, but represents a later addition. It's unknown whether the original Mark ended with 16:8 (the flight of the women from the empty tomb) or whether the original last verses were deleted, or lost, and replaced with the passages we now have. The last part of Matthew (28:16-20) seems also to have been by a later hand.

¶¶ Paul gives a short "resurrection" narrative which has Jesus appear (ophthein) to Peter, the Twelve (not "Eleven", oddly enough, as if Judas were still included in the story he heard), and various others -- but not Mary Magdalene! -- including Paul. Jesus appeared (ophthein) to Paul in a vision, as is clear from Acts. Yet he sees no difference between his experience and that of, for instance, Peter. Perhaps there was none. Paul's narrative is earlier by at least a generation than the earliest of the Gospel passages on this subject.

¶¶ Of Mary Magdalene (or Miriam of Magdala) and her companions (if any), Mark says (16:8): "And they went out quickly, and fled from the sepulchre; for they trembled and were amazed; neither said they any thing to any man; for they were afraid." But Matthew says (28:8): "And they departed quickly from the sepulchre with fear and great joy; and did run to bring his disciples word." This isn't just a "difference in viewpoint": it's a direct contradiction. This is typical of the problems we face in the "resurrection" narratives.

The "nativity" narratives present similar problems; luckily, we have only two of them to worry about, but even a casual reading will show that they have virtually no details in common. Craig's argument shows you some good examples of the sorts of special pleadings involved in trying to force them to fit--pleadings which run the gamut from having no support in the written record to doing considerable violence to it. These are clearly late inventions of the same historical calibre as the tales of Abe Lincoln being born in a log cabin or George Washington chopping down a cherry tree.

Craig clearly knows that the major problem is the time discrepancy. He devotes heavy attention to it. And he quotes from a 1960 devotional book a passage full of some rather antique chestnuts. Referring to the passage in which Luke clearly contradicts Matthew, it says,

But it is now widely admitted that an earlier enrollment, as described in Luke ... (a) may have taken place in the reign of Herod the Great, (b) may have involved the return of everyone to his family home, (c) may have formed part of an Empire-wide census, and (d) may have been held during a previous governorship of Quirinius over Syria.

These are not "widely admitted"; furthermore, none of them is even remotely probable. The question of this census is admirably dealt with by Father Raymond E Brown in his scholarly The Birth of the Messiah (1977), pp. 547-556 -- not to mention other recent writers. Let's take each of these hypotheses which allegedly square Luke with Matthew.

(a) Was there a census during the reign of Herod the Great? No. The clearest proof of that is the fact that Josephus doesn't mention one (although he gives a long discussion of the census under Quirinius in 6-7AD. Herod, an Idumaean whose throne was never secure, would never have provoked his subjects by "numbering" them. From the time of the Davidic monarchy, the people of Israel had resisted and resented being "numbered". Indeed, the Roman-conducted census of 6-7 provoked widespread violence and gave rise to the Zealot movement.

(b) Were people required to return to an ancestral town? No. No census in the Empire was ever conducted on such a basis. The flimsy pretext for the assertion in Craig's source is an Egyptian census of 104AD. Egypt was always administratively distinct from the rest of the Empire, anyway. In this census, Egyptians located away from their homes were required to return to them

to be enumerated and taxed. "Homes", in this instance, meant the cities in which they were domiciled and owned property -- not some vague "ancestral" town. No census in the Roman Empire ever involved wholesale movements of populations. Not only is there no evidence for it, and abundant evidence to the contrary, a moment's use of common sense would tell you why things were never done that way.

(c) Would Herod's Judea have been included in an Imperial census? Hardly. First of all, the Imperial government did not extend to allies (that is, client kingdoms), which remained nominally independent. Secondly, during the reign of Augustus (and of Herod), there were only 3 Imperial censuses (BC28, BC8, and 13-14AD). They counted Roman citizens only. Even the later census, to which Luke refers (6-7 AD) was a special census of Judea only, conducted by the Romans to establish the tax base after Judea had become Roman territory.

(d) Was Quirinius at any previous time also Legate (Governor) of Syria? No. The idea that he may have been is based on the fact that he was in the East on other occasions -- but none of them was actually as Legate of Syria. The career of Publius Sulpicius Quirinius is relatively well documented, as is the chronology of the Legates of Syria. It should be noted here that Josephus, in describing Quirinius' installation as Legate (which he does several times), never once even hints that he had served in this position previously. Quirinius did lead a military expedition against the Homonadenses in the Taurus Mountains at some time between BC12-6. He was also advisor to the Legate of Syria (then Gaius Caesar) from about BC1 to 4AD (but these years are of course after the death of Herod and too late to do the "two-term" argument any good. The succession of Syrian Legates, BC23-6AD is: M. Agrippa, M. Titus, S. Sentius Saturninus, Quin[c]tillus Varus, Gaius Caesar, L. Volusius Saturninus, and P. Sulpicius Quirinius. A few years are not clearly accounted for, but the years BC9-4 are known.

On the basis of date alone, therefore, the accounts of Luke and Matthew do not harmonize.

This circuituous route brings us back to my main point: that in terms of detail, the Bible is a defective text. This means that in order to extract the "historical Jesus", for instance, a large amount of analysis is needed. I agree with Craig that a lot of scholarly work on the subject has been characterized by skepticism (I feel "cynicism" isn't quite the right word; it implies a self-imposed will to doubt rather than the natural lack of credulousness which properly characterizes any scholarly endeavor). Craig has stated that faith ought to be congruent with truth -- but it is precisely the position of Christianity of the fundamentalist, charismatic, and evangelical persuasions that truth must be congruent with faith. Nowhere is this mediaeval attitude on their part more clear than in the fight they wage on behalf of the pseudo-science of "creationism". The present discussion hits at another sensitive area. But here we have virtually nothing to go on but the very documents which are in dispute.

The Church has, in this regard, for 1900 years carried a double burden: the burden of the truth intermingled with the burden of its own fantasies about its founder. This would pose a problem of only passing curiosity if Jesus were (as is claimed in many more cynical [perhaps] quarters) a more-or-less ordinary person: a schemer who failed to engineer his own pretended "resurrection", a Zealot with a bent for philosophy, a deluded "prophet" who mistakenly believed his own eschatological cant, whatever. But I think we have something else here.

The Church bears this double burden primarily because of its own initial optimism. It wasn't too long, however, before it became clear that the Church's most vaunted teaching -- "Behold, I come quickly." -- was a bust. The expected "second coming" -- which Jesus is represented as predicting to occur within the lifetime of his own generation -- didn't happen. This failure had to be explained and compensated for -- and thus the modern Church and all its insistence that faith must dictate truth came into existence. But it carried and preserved all that survives (save a few dubious passages in the "Gospel of Thomas") of the historical Jesus. Jesus is reported to have said -- and I believe he did say -- "He who has heard me has heard the Abba." If we abandon a sterile faith based on the frustrated expectations of 19 centuries ago, and seek the real Jesus who taught wholly extraordinary things in ancient Palestine, we may someday not only change the Church, but the world as well.

Be thankful, O Editor, that what you got was the short version,

Bob

MELINDA'S PAGE

Are either Ross or Eric climbers? A bit of advice for parents who might have such a child. Forget about breaking them of the urge to climb. You can't do it. The best thing to do is channel the urge to climb by allowing the child to climb under controlled circumstances. It greatly relieves the possibility of your having a heart attack when you see your very young child on the house roof. Yes, house roof. I was 22 months old when I climbed up there. My father had gone up to patch a small leak in the roof. The roof of the house has 3 inverted cones forming a cul-de-sac. The leak in question was in the cul-de-sac. My mother was busy taking care of my younger sister so I was put outside to play. The idea was that my father would watch me while he was working. Plus, I knew where I could not go (which was outside the yard). I watched my father bring all his tools around to the front yard and watched him set up the ladder. I also watched as he started climbing the ladder. This looked like fun so I started climbing up after him. Across the street sat a neighbor, Mrs. Bias. She glanced up from her book to see me scrambling up the ladder (my father totally oblivious to what I was doing). She was afraid to yell at my dad to warn him for fear I would be startled and fall. So she sat there and had a heart attack while watching me. When dad stepped off the ladder I reached out and pulled at his pants. He thought this was ok. No problem in his 22 month old daughter being on the roof. After all he was there as well. So he reached down and pulled me up with him. He herded me into the cul-de-sac figuring I couldn't fall from there. I was instructed to stay in the rear of the cul-de-sac so he could work. One thing my father hated was to be interrupted in the middle of a job. So he figured I was taken care of. Now watching dad fix the roof got a little boring after a while and I couldn't see anything. So I scrambled up the rear inverted cone and sat astride it. Reportedly my father's only warning was not to fall. He rationalized that if I fell both of us would be in BIG trouble, so don't fall. That sounded reasonable to me. Dad said later he could see I had a good sense of balance so no problem. Sitting up there I could see further than I knew existed. Glancing across the alley I saw our neighbor, Mrs. Woods. She didn't have a dryer so she hung her laundry out to dry in her backyard. I yelled to her and she started looking around on the ground where she figured I would be. She glanced around the porch (even under it), behind the hedge, and even went into the alley (where I knew I wasn't supposed to be). No luck. In the meantime, I'm up on the roof yelling my head off at Mrs. Woods. Now, I was born in Florida and had learned to talk with a distinctive Southern accent so Mrs. Woods knew it was me yelling at her. Finally, she glanced up and saw me sitting astride the cone on the top of the roof. This is when she dropped the basket of clean laundry into the mud. I got blamed for this...I never understood why but I did. She comes running across the alley, into our backyard and into the house. By now she's screaming for my mother. I think the whole thing is hilarious and slide down to tell dad. Mrs. Woods finds mom and asks "Where's the baby?" Mom, naturally figuring she means my younger sister, tells her the baby is taking a nap. Mrs. Woods gasps out she means Melinda. Mom says I'm in the front yard playing. Mrs. Woods informs her that I'm on the roof. Now mom inherited her grandfather's red-haired Irish temper. She barrels into the front yard screaming at my dad. In her anger she used his middle name (Anderson) which usually precipitated a fight. She wants to know where I AM. Dad replies that I'm on the roof with him. What's the problem? The problem, mom yells, is that I have no business on the roof and he should have better sense. The upshot of this yelling match was that I was un-

cerimoniously brought down the ladder (Dad said I got up there on my own, I could get down on my own but Mom insisted he bring me down) and sternly told not to go back up there. Naturally I disobeyed. Dad figured he was in enough trouble and ratted by yelling to mom. The only way they could keep me off (and I was spanked for disobeying not 2 minutes after I was told not to climb the ladder) was to set the ladder on the ground after dad went up. When he was done, he would yell for mom to come and put the ladder back up. This soon wore very thin and Dad convinced mom not to get hyper on my climbing. So he taught me about balance and reach. Despite a couple of near misses, I never fell. Now I'm passing my little "store of information" onto my neice's younger daughter, Laura, who is as bad a climber as I ever was.



JESSE M. UNRUH

(1923-1987)



75

THE GAMES

THE FOLLOWING GAMES HAVE NOT YET STARTED, BUT WILL SHORTLY:

THE LOPSIDED LION (regular Dip). I have five players confirmed (I once had six, but one guy had to drop out). However, in the last ten days or so - as a consequence of the Runestone win - I have had nine enquiries! The first two that get in, the game starts. If nobody joins from that pack, I have two other people I owe favors to; maybe they'll consider this game a repayment.

ALI BABA (Railway Rivals 'speed' game, 10-day deadline, Isle of Wight map). Doug Brown and Paul Gardner are in; I've asked Don Del Grande to join; if he says no, I'll talk Bob O'Donnell into it. One way or the other, it will start as soon as the maps arrive from David - which should be quite soon, as I actually 'phoned him last week to have them sent.

"?" and "?" - Two Rivale games to be run by Rip Gooch in his COSTA subzine (and perhaps also as a subzine to his own DIVERSIONS) called TRANSATLANTIC RAILWAY. I have no idea what Rip will name the games; one is already under way, the other is close. Until Rip decides, I have nicknamed them 'Naughty Marietta' and 'The Chocolate Soldier.' Not necessarily in that order.

////////////////////////////////////

THE FOLLOWING GAME IS DELAYED, BUT AT LEAST THIS TIME IT'S PLANNED:

THE DELIRIOUS DIK-DIK (1985HE - Spring 1908)

By flyer dated July 24, I advised the players of the following adjustments for Winter 1907:

AUSTRIA (Waltere, for Walker): Retreated a gre-alb, a tri-bud.
 ENGLAND (Billenness): Built a lon, f edi.
 FRANCE (Acheson): Built a par.
 ITALY (Jensen): Built f rom, f nsp.
 RUSSIA (Botimer): No change.

The deadline for Spring '08 was pushed forward to Aug. 15 (Saturday) owing to the player change and a confusion over an address. At this time I have moves from E, F and R; I do not yet have moves from A or I, the two people for whom the delay was granted.

////////////////////////////////////

THE FOLLOWING GAME IS CANCELLED AND DISCARDED:

GO FISH (1987GF-01-R&E): And it was going so well, too, but unfortunately Eric has recently eaten two of the cards, and I am unable to find replacements. I must therefore, with regret, call the game off and throw the rest of the cards in the trash. However, there is hope. I have just sent away for a muzzle, and when it arrives, we will try 'Crazy Eighte.'

GAME 1987Q - The Autistic Aoudad - Spring 1901

It is with a great deal of pleasure that I commence this long-delayed game; the original Spring deadline was back in (gasp!) February! Of course the reason cannot be faulted - there's a big difference between starting a Dip game and trying to avoid dying of cancer - but still, it's been awkward, and I appreciate all of you hanging in there. I also appreciate very much Nhan Vu's agreement to fill in the one missing spot.

And speaking of Nhan - he tells me that at the moment he is, for practical purposes, on a Grand Tour of the United States, visiting relatives and in effect cementing family ties among the scattered pieces of his family in his adopted nation. He does say, however, that all mail to his home address will be quickly forwarded by his parents to whatever stop he's currently making. So do write, but also allow a few extra days for a reply.

I look forward to Nhan's return home, for two reasons. First of all, he lives only a hundred miles away, and I intend to go meet the gent. Second, he just bought a modem, and - he doesn't know it yet, but he's going to be the guinea pig when I teach myself to use the system in answer mode.

Anyway - happy summer game-start, and (as they said for thirty-six years on the Peter Pan ride at Disneyland, but do no longer), "Here we go...."

AUSTRIA (Paul Milewski): a bud-tri. a vie-tyo. f tri-adr.
 ENGLAND (Melinda Ann Holley): a lvp-edi. f edi-nwg. f lon-nth.
 FRANCE (Jack McHugh): a par-pic. a mar-bur. f bre-eng.
 GERMANY (Marshall Linder): a ber-kie. a mun-ruh. f kie-den.
 ITALY (Nhan Vu): a ven h. a rom-nap. f nap-ion.
 RUSSIA (Bob Addison): a mos-ukr. a war-sil. f stp so - bot. f sev-bla.
 TURKEY (Bill Rose): a con-bul. a smy-con. f ank-bla.

There are, of course, no retreats.

Some notes on my notation system, though it's fairly obvious in most cases. Underlined moves fail. To avoid using the shift key too much, I type everything except the underline in lower case. Thus, the simple letters s = support, c = convoy, h = hold. In the case of those few provinces that have ambiguous three-letter abbreviations, here's what I use (though, if it's clear, you can write anything you like): lvn = Livonia; lvp = Liverpool; lyo = Gulf of Lyons; bot = Gulf of Bothnia; tyo = Tyrolia; tyn = Tyrrhenian; nth = North Sea; nat = North Atlantic; nwy = Norway; nwg = Norwegian Sea.

As far as house rules, don't worry about it. I'll get you copies as soon as I finish rewriting them. For now, be assured of two major things: (1) If your moves make any sense whatsoever, I do not hold you to piddling technicalities; as a quick example which is fairly typical, if you have a fleet and accidentally call it an army, as long as the order is legal, it'll go with no problem. (2) I don't have any 'weird' rules. My house rules are intended to make the postal game as easily playable as possible, with as few technical requirements as I can get away with.

Anyway. Check the inside cover of the issue for deadline, and get back to the killing.

Oh - there was no press this time, but press (no limitations) is more than welcome.

WHUPS! See p 40 for late press!

GAME 1986AC - The Bisexual Bear - Fall 1905

AUSTRIA (Heintzman): a sil-ber. a tri-ven. a tyo s TUR boh-mun. f ven-spu. f adr s tri-ven.
 ENGLAND (Denny): a bre-bel. f eng c bre-bel. f ber s TUR mos-stp. f iri s mid. f mid s FRE por.
 FRANCE (Anderson): f por h.
 GERMANY (Crosby): a mun-sil. a pic-bel. a par h. a ges-bur. a ber s mun-sil. a nwy s stp. a stp h. f nth s pio-bel.
 ITALY (Greier): a spa s mar. a tus-tun. f tyn-lyo. f nap s tun-ion ((sic)). f tun-naf. f mar s spa.
 TURKEY (Wilcox): a pru s AUS sil-ber. a boh-sil. a lvn s mos-stp. a gal-sil. a mos-stp. f con-aeg. f wss s ITA tun-naf. f bla-con.

RETREATS: German a ber r kie, o.t.b.; German a stp r fin, o.t.b.
 Adjustments may be conditional.

I have made an executive decision that there is no press.

CENTRES:

A: 7: vie, bud, tri, eer, gre, ven, ber. Build two.
 E: 4: lon, lvp, edi, bre. Remove one.
 F: 1: por. Even.
 G: 8: kis, mun, hol, bel, per, den, swe, nwy. Even.
 I: 5: rom, nap, tun, spa, mar. Remove one.
 T: 9: con, say, ank, sev, mos, stp, war, rum, bul. Build one.

Note of course that if either German unit retreats off the board, Germany may build one.

I have a proposal for declaring this a draw between A and T. Votes with next orders please; one 'nay' kills, one 'yea' - in the absence of 'nays' - passes.

ADJUSTMENTS ONLY ARE DUE WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 19 (Wednesday) and will be reported by flyer. And with that information in hand you'll be able to finalize Spring 1906 by the deadline printed on the inside cover of this issue.

((SEE ALSO DATE PRESS ON P. 40))

/ / / / / / / - / / / / / / / - / / / / / / / - /

GAME 1985Mrb32 - Richard M. Johnson ('Gunboat') - Spring 1907

This is John Walker's other game - along with AOUDAD on the prior page - and, again, it's nice to see it alive again.

AUSTRIA: a vie s boh. a tri-ven. a bud-gal. a war-pru. a gal-war. a boh s tyo-mun. a tyo-mun.
 ENGLAND: a stp-nwy. a lvn-stp. f lon-eng. f nwy-nth. f den-bel. f tun-tyn. f wss s tun-tyn. f naf-tun.
 FRANCE: a par s bel-bur. a bel-bur. a gas-mar. a por-spa. f mar-lyo. f tus s ENG wss-tyn.
 GERMANY: a kie s ruh-hol. a ruh-hol. a mun s sil. a sil s mun.
 TURKEY: a mos-lvn. a ukr s sev-mos. a sev-mos. f epu s aeg-ion. f ion-naf. f grs s aeg-ion. f aeg-ion. f tyn-tus.

All draws were voted down. Retreat: Tur f tyn-rom, o.t.b.; Fall movss may be conditional.

See the deadline on one of the inside covers.

TURKEY TO AUSTRIA (f tyn-tus): Welcome to the game. I hope we can continue

working together. I apologize for Rom/Nap - there's not much I can do there to help. Please take Rumania to offset your losses.

FRANCE TO WORLD: Yes, I took Belgium from my German ally. I will be vacating ASAP in order to allow Germany to gain an extra unit for OUR front. I only took Belgium, with warning, to allow myself a restructure. I needed a fleet to help against the Turk, and as I lose Belgium I will remove an unneeded army. I only regret Germany didn't trust me and remove Ruhr instead of Prussia. But then, who could blame him. But again, we French are firmly behind a G/E/F alliance.

JAMUL: Ten bucks to the person (other than the one who will know instantly) who can tell me what one thing is wrong with that press release.

SWITZERLAND: Rumor has it that Bob Olsen is the new Austria.

JAMUL: Well, not to give anything away, but...Bob Olsen and I apparently do not speak any more. I suspect it's because I'm firmly in the Bruce Linsey camp in this hobby....

NOVA SCOTIA: Rumor has it that Bob Olsen is the new Conrad.

JAMUL-ON-THE-HALIFAX: Oh, is that why my fingers seem to type without any control....

JAMUL-ON-THE-YARMOUTH: Oh, by the way, why Nova Scotia? Did you know that my family came from there?

//// , // // , / , / , / , / , // // , // // , / , / , / , //

GAME 1985D - The Narcoleptic Nilgai - Spring 1910

ENGLAND (Greier): a bur-pic. f lon s bre-eng. f bre-eng. f bel s bre-eng. f nat-lvp. f stp sc - nwy.

FRANCE (Tighe): f por h.

GERMANY (Gardner): a ruh-hol. a kie s ruh-hol. a fin s swe-nwy. a swe-nwy. f den-nth.

ITALY (Jensen): a par-bre. a tyo s TUR boh-mun. a mar-bur. a gas s par-bre. a pie-mar. f nap-tyu. f rom-tus. f iri-val. f mid-nat. f spa sc s TUR wes.

RUSSIA (Minshall): f nwy s ENG stp.

TURKEY (Pustilnik): a boh-mun. a ber s boh-mun. a pru s ber. a sil s boh-mun. a mos-stp. a lvn s mos-stp. a gal-boh. a war h. a ukr-mos. f bla h. f wes-mid.

Retreats: Eng f stp-ber, o.t.b. Rus f nwy-ska, nwg, bar, o.t.b.
Fall moves may be conditional.

The drew proposal was vetoed, and there is no press, and if you look inside one of the cover pages you may well find some indication of the deadline for next round.

//// // // // // // // // // // // // // // // // // // // // // // // // // // // // // // // // // // //

THIS IS THE END OF A PAGE.

TURN TO THE NEXT PAGE FOR MORE.

GAME 19860 - The Convoluted Cassowary - Fall 1906

AUSTRIA (Givan): a gal s bud-rum. a bud-rum. a vie-tri.
 ENGLAND (O'Donnell): a stp h. a den h. a nwy s stp. f eng s nth.
 f swe-bal. f bot s swe-bal. f nth s den.
 FRANCE (Botimer): a bur-pic. a par-bre. f spa sc - mid. f wee s spa-
 mid. f mid-nat.
 GERMANY (Pustilnik): a hol s bel. a bel h. a kie s RUS bal-den.
f hel s RUS bal-dea.
 ITALY (Greier): a ven s AUS vie-tri. f nap-tyn. f apu-adr. f tun-tyn.
 RUSSIA (Mateunas): a war-lvn. a ber s GER kie. a mos s war-lvn.
f bal-bot.
 TURKEY (Holley): a ser s rum. a rum s eer. f aeg-ion. f ion-adr.
 f alb s ion-adr. f gre s aeg-ion. f eas s aeg-ion.

Retreat: Rue f bal-pru, o.t.b.; next orders may be conditional.

There has been no change in supply centers this year, and therefore there are no adjustments. So we'll go right into Spring 1907, due on the specified deadline (see inside cover). Note: If Russia retreats to oblivion, he will have a build, and you may write your orders to cover this eventuality.

I wonder if any hobby statistice exist on how long a game has gone on with all seven powers still at least at their starting strength. (I happen to know another statistic that may intrigue you, but maybe not; the longest a game has continued without a change in supply ownership is twelve consecutive game years. So for this one, you have a way to go.....)

Did I mention, in my flyer a couple of weeks ago, that Peter Mateunas has a temporary address until Aug. 13 - c/o Boy Scouts, 601 Ave. 'H' East, PO Box 5967, Arlington, TX 76005. After the 13th he's back in Saratoga Springs, per last issue's master address list. Hmm...considering when you'll all be receiving this, why did I even bring the matter up?

TSAR'S MOUNTAIN RETREAT TO PRIME MINISTER: Eat snow and die!

AUSTRIA TO ITALY: Not much hope here if you're just going to hold. Maybe you want to see Melinda win this one, tno.

CONSTANTINOPLE TO LONDON: Flattery will get you quite a lot, Prince Charming!

LONDON TO RUSSIAN TOAD: I'll be happy to leave your ex-winter palace, but you won't let me!

MOSCOW TO LONDON: Cossacks are Russian!

CONSTANTINOPLE TO JAMUL: Okay, forget cute and fancy. Now it's down and dirty! (Excuse me, I've been listening to too much George Carlin.)

JAMUL: Yeah, I'm in a bad mond too - I've been listening to too much Millie and Bill Karlan (my in-laws).

LONDON TO ANKARA: A fear spell would not work on me; it must have bounced to the French.

ITALY TO FRANCE: Stab me and you shall face the awesome Ottoman navy. Can you handle five ships with a female at the helm?

MILLIFICENT TO TSAR: I'm trying!

LONDON TO PARIS: What changed??? Have you become the next Turkish toad? I didn't believe you would help her, but then....

TURKEY TO JAMUL: Monogamy? What's that?

JAMUL: My dictionary says it's "mating or pairing with only one partner at a time," a principle which I have carefully followed with Jean for twelve years. And Donna for six, and Ellen for four, and....

RIN TIN TO MILLIE: These boys don't know what they're talking about. Why should you waste a really good spell on them?

LONDON TO KIEL: You have gotten your wish, France has attacked! My hat is off to you!

CONSTANTINOPLE TO MOSCOW: Your southern flank is o.k. from me!

JAMUL: You know, in typing all that prese, I've learned something. When I bought my computer, I went out and got a good word processing program, and even paid a little extra for one that had a decent spelling checker. Boy, did I waste my money! I don't need a spelling checker; I am a spelling checker! Now, if you could convert my mouth to a floppy drive and my glasses to a monitor, you could just plug me into the RS-232 (you figure out how!) and save a batch of bucks....

/ / / // / / // / / / // / / / // / / / //

GAME 1986Arb32 - Schuyler Colfax ('Gunboat') - Fall 1907

The retreats from Spring were: Ita a tri-tyo, Ita f ion-nap. And the proposed draw was vetoed.

ENGLAND: a den-ber. a stp-mos. a ruh-bur. f eng-bre. f nth-eng.
f naf-wes. f mid s eng-bre. f kie s den-ber. f bal c den-ber.
f bel-pic.

FRANCE: a gas s bre. a mun s par-bur. a par-bur. f spa sc - mid.
f bre s spa-mid.

ITALY: a tyo s alb-tri. a ven s alb-tri. f tun-tyn. f nap-tyn. f alb-tri. f por-spa sc.

RUSSIA: a mos s sil-war. a sil-war. a ber-kie.

TURKEY: a vie s tri. a ser s tri. a tri s vie. a con-apu. a arm-sev.
f meg c con-apu. f ion c con-apu. f adr s ion. f bla s arm-sev.
f gre s ion.

Retreat: Rus a ber to pru or sil; adjustments may be conditional.

CENTRES:

E: 11: lon, lvp, edi, nwy, swe, stp, den, ber, kie, hol, bel. Build one.

F: 5: par, war, bre, mun, spa. Even.

I: 5: ven, rom, nap, tun, por. Remove one.

R: 2: mos, war. Remove one.

T: 11: con, smy, ank, sev, bul, rum, ser, gre, vie, tri, bud. Build one.

I think the removals are just crucial enough that it might be best to hold to winter this time. Oh - also please vote on two proposed conclusions: E/T draw, and T win. Kind of unfair to France, I suppose, but....

SCENE: The Sultan's opulent throne room
 TIME: Summer 1907

Sultan: "What do you mean, my mail was misplaced!!! The Royal Mail!!
 Heads will roll! Bring me the secretary!"

(The secretary is dragged in and tossed at the Sultan's feet.)

Sultan: "Any explanation?"

Secretary (cringing): "I swear upon my mother's grave, your letter was
 mailed as usual with great care. I saw the posting of it personally!"

Sultan: "You should swear upon your own grave, it's much closer."

Secretary: "I have a copy of your missive, Sire! It can be re-sent."

Sultan: "Very well, do so. You are ordered to Rome. You will be in the
 city before my troops arrive, to personally deliver the message."

Secretary (fawning): "I am on my way, Lord." (exsunt)

Sultan (to Chamberlain): "Draw up the Secretary's itinerary. He is to
 visit Rome, Berlin, Paris and then London. And soon!"

(curtain)

JAMUL: Please note that the above is one of two tattered fragments recently
 unearthed in the ruins of a small stone cottage in Stratford-on-Avon. I
 have reprinted this one for your edification. Preliminary scholarly opinion
 is that the other fragment is not authentic.

SULTAN TO ITALY'S CHIEF: I have just opened a set of six vacation villas
 in the hills above my palace. I am cordially inviting you to a restful
 vacation. Actually...perhaps not so restful. Suzanne of Austria has been
 my guest in one villa for a year, and has worn me out. I would appreciate
 a little help entertaining my energetic guest. Come soon, as the villas
 are not equally furnished. I expect them all to be occupied in a few
 years.

JAMUL: Er, could someone please send me a Band-Aid for my tongue?

ENGLAND TO PORTUGAL: Yes, 1908 will see English support of Por-Spa.

ROME TO PARIS: So I've got a one-track mind. So sue me! If England goes
 for it, so will I.

SULTAN TO PARIS: My intentions are quite honorable. If you wish my aid
 against the English invaders, I am quite willing to help. By the way, I
 have no slaves, only very willing servants.

PARIS: It's time to face the facts: Turkey has this game WON! He will
 gain the 18 centers, and NO ONE can stop him, especially since Italy won't
 fight him!

SULTAN TO MOSCOW: Having a nice nap? Don't worry, I'll take care of
 everything....

LONDON TO PARIS: Yes, we can beat the Turk together! For your part in
 this glorious victory, I'd suggest vacating Brest, Munich, Spain, Paris
 and Marseilles. I'll do the rest. And thanks for the offer!

RUSSIA TO FRANCE: Please don't help England into Berlin!

JAMUL: Contrary to popular belief, that was not left over from last time!

SULTAN TO JAMUL: Somehow I find it more fun writing press for a game in which I'm not the Sick Man of Europe.

JAMUL: Well, if the present quality is any indication, you are most cordially invited to double your output. One of the reasons I've used so much white-out in typing this is that it is very tough to type while rolling on the floor....

On the other hand, my best press has somehow always come in games in which I'm getting stomped. I've done three series over the years that I was especially proud of: "Puffa-Puffa" for John Leader (I kept writing even after elimination), "Crottled Greeps" for Richard Walkerdine (I came in second in the game, John Piggott won, and it was Piggott who made the finest game in my 22-year playing career most especially thrilling), and "ZSOS" for Alan Stewart - this one unfortunately had to be curtailed owing to the problems that almost killed this 'zine a few months ago.

I think the point is this: I can either focus on press, or I can emphasize strategy. But I am incapable of both. Therefore, if ever you see me writing press, you know I'll be on my way out....

Of course it's immaterial, as I no longer play Diplomacy....

ROME TO LONDON: You call it!

SULTAN TO LONDON: You can have the Atlantic, but the Mediterranean is mine. And so is Africa.

////////////////////////////////////

Well, it's two days past deadline. "Rather Silly" and the three "Rivals" games remain, and in all four cases we have a problem.

For "Meigs," I lack Robin's order. I know he tried to 'phone his move to me on Tuesday, but the connection was broken (at the office) before he could get through, and he's not tried again - maybe my fault, inasmuch as, being temporarily on the night shift and needing my sleep, I've been leaving the 'phone off-hook.

For "Hotellerie," Robin did ring his moves, but either I mis-transcribed or he's confused, because they make no earthly sense.

And for "Crescendo" and "Pinnalione," David's orders lack. I spoke to him some days ago and he was in process of posting them, down inside a tube of maps which I also needed; I should have known better, air parcels can take quite a bit more time than simple letters.

Anyway, tomorrow is Saturday. If nothing arrives in the post, I will finalize "Meigs" by faking something for Robin, finish off the issue, and cart it off to the printer. Then when "Rivals" moves come in, I'll crank out some flyers and take care of them separately. I can't imagine we're speaking of any great length of time here....

And now it is time to finalize the central part of the issue, and then count pages to see if I need more or not. Also the "Gamefinder...."

////////////////////////////////////

THIS IS A BOTTOM-OF-PAGE FILLER. It is not a book review. Fans of superior science-fantasy of the strong plot, strong character type: Go seek out Paul Cook's HALO and/or ON THE RIM OF THE MANDALA. (The former is superior.) They represent a truly fine s/f 'read.'

GAME 1986Bcn05 - WILLIAM R. DE VANE KING (Cline 9-Person)

SEE PAGE 12, "COUP D'ETAT."

/// /// /// /// /// /// /// /// /// /// /// /// /// /// /// /// ///

QUESTION: How many Zen Buddhists does it take to change a light bulb?

ANSWER: Two. One to do it and one not to do it.

(Unashamedly stolen from BEOWULF 4.)

! ! !! ! ! !! ! ! !! ! ! !! ! ! !! ! ! !! ! ! !! ! ! !! ! !

GAME 1986APv106 - Return J. Meigs, Jr. ("Rather Silly Dip") - Winter '01

One error in the game report, caused entirely by my poor penmanship. In quoting the English positions to Rod for purposes of gaining standby moves, I read 'f nwy' instead of 'f nwg.' Rod naturally ordered a 'hold.' And I, of course, took him at face value. The correct order should have been 'f nwg-nwy,' and that is what we're going to allow to occur.

Moves have not been received again from Roberto, nor this time from Peter either. Again, I've used local friends to order the builds. However, beginning in 1902 I no longer use my patented Automatic Standby system, so next time, a missed move is NMR.

Oh, by the way, you ask: Which Peter? Well, actually, both....

Several players have lost the rules and have asked for more. Some others have lost their Llamas and have asked where they are. At the time I post this issue, I will ship everyone a duplicate copy of the rules (including a few amendments), and will re-type them into better form soon. As to Llamas (applies only to the seven 'Great Powers'), here is where they are:

Now I wonder whom I'm going to find for standby moves for England France? (I'm not in the least worried about Russia.) Well, let's try something wild: For England, Mark Weidmark. For France, Robert Achesson. We need some Canadians in here....addressa per last issue.

And finally - from that addressa list last time, two people have moved: Jake Waltera is now at 1415 Beacon St., Brookline, MA 02146. And Bruce Geryk is at 5528 S. Everett St., #3-D, Chicago, IL 60637.

WINTER 1901

The Russian f run retreats to sev.

A (Mills): Builds a vie, a bud.

E (Della-Sala?): Builds f lon.

F (apCynan): Builds Siameas A'Pio/F Bre.

G (Sullivan): Builds a kie, a ber.

I (Brown): Builds a ven, f nap.

R (Matsunaa): No changes.

T (Vu): Builds f con, f ank.

D (Geryk): Has T Kis. (That's "Tardia Kisl." I've been erroneously listing it as a Fleet.)

M (Burgess): Builds f cor, f ice.

S (Walters): No unite yet.

And the Borg, repcees in Bulgaria.

Kindly reference the inside cover page for Spring 1902 deadline. As of this writing I already have orders from Nhan, Doug, Craig, Jim and David.

Please reference last issue for our current positions. Note that Italy has a double army Trieste, Russia has a double army Livonia (both being the result of sales to Mephistopheles) - Italy's double is valid through the Spring '02 move, Russia's until Fall (or Autumn for you Brits). And France now has a Siamese A/P, please note the rule for strength of this abomination.

Oh - finally, in answer to a question about there being two units in Kiel; the Doctor may co-exist in any province with any other unit. I have been listing the Doctor's unit as a fleet, when it fact really isn't; but it is still there legitimately. As to ownership of the centre, Germany is the owner; the Doctor does not own supply centers per se. Unless he...

OH MY GOSH!

I just read my own stupid rules, and the "Doctor captures supply centres by being alone in them on a Fall move." Tch. Looks like the Doctor owns Kiel after all, and Germany doesn't get two builds after all.

OKAY: Doctor builds F Kie, and also has Tardis Kiel. Germany builds only A Ber. Please make corrections on the last couple of pages.

I think I'm beginning to understand why Walkerdine claims that this game forced him into a fold....

PRESS:

ROME: Italian President Armpit Brownotto has acquired pizza pies in great number and has sent them all to Munich in an offer of friendship. "Now if all my friends just go to Munich, I'll join you for the feast." (Lotsa garlic too!)

ITALY TO TSAR: I haven't received no letter, and I don't even live in U.K. Don't you like pizza?

(Note that a press item from the Jester is being withheld until Spring owing to its content.)

DRAW PROPOSALS LAST TIME WERE ALL VETOED. This time, we have a vote called to declare the game a draw between I and J. (That's Italy and Jamul.) And by the way, have I told you all about Jamul, pronounced "ha-MOOL"? Please remind me to do so at great length.

FRANK AND ERNEST

Bob Thaves



RAILWAY RIVALS - Game US 511X - "L'Hotellerie Portugaise"Round Two - Throws 6,4,4

EGMONT LINE (orange): 2a.: (Jönköping) - Nässjö - N21; (J21) - J18.
 2b.: (J18) - Skövde - J15; (J24) - K25. 2c.: (K25) - Växjö;
 (N21) - A62 - B61.

ES GUD RA-RODE (brown): 2a.: (C54) - Motala - A56. 2a.: (A56) -
Linköping; (Eskilstuna) - E50. 2c.: (E50) - E47; (Linköping) -
 B57.

FAUSTUS (green): 2a.: (N10) - N12 - K14 - K15. 2b.: (K15) - K16 -
 Skövde - H17. 2c.: (H17) - D19.

SCHEISSEN (red): 2a.: (Krietianstad) - N29 - Karlskrona. 2b.: (Karls-
 krona) - D69 - D67. 2c.: (D67) - Kalmar; (F27) - Halmstad; (N29) -
 N27.

Egmont's moves fiddled a squib. Note, Bob, that the hex in which you start each move does not count against the total throw. As an example, you wrote 2a as follows: Jönköping - L22 ((sic)) - Nässjö; J21 - J20 - J19 - J18. And you called it six. No, it's only five. Take a look at the way I printed your 2a above (after I fiddled it); the hexes (either town or regular hexes) in parentheses do not count against the total. Thus (Jönköping) - L21 is one, to Nässjö is two; to N21 (the addition I "fiddled") is three; (J21) - J18 totals six, you do not pay again for either Jönköping or J21, both of which you entered - and paid for - on the first round. Is that clear?

REVENUE: Note that arrival at Skövde was simultaneous, therefore the two lines split the bonus.

RED: 38 +6 (Karlskrona) +6 (Kalmar) +6 (Halmstad) = 56.
 BROWN: 38 +6 (Motala) +6 (Linköping) -1 (green, E49) = 49.
 ORANGE: 32 +6 (Nässjö) +6 (Växjö) +3 (half of Skövde) = 47.
 GREEN: 32 +3 (half of Skövde) +1 (brown, E49) = 36.

Note that, even had the two lines not arrived simultaneously, no payment for the junction in Skövde would be required. There are no payments to rivals in town hexes.

THROWS FOR ROUND THREE: 5-4-4. See deadline on an inside cover.

/// // // // // // // // // // // // // // // // // // // //

IL CRESCENDOPIMMALIONE

As noted on page 36, there was a possibility of a short delay in these two. The possibility is now reality, and they will follow as soon as possible. The only effect is going to be to cost me a squib more postage (for flyers); the games will not, in fact, have a delay because of this.

ONE MORE GAME TO GO, AND WE PRINT!

ERIC DEPT.: Eric just walked up to the side of my bed (wherein I was nursing my sore back on the heating pad) and said, "Do you want a hug?"

On providing same, Eric suddenly sprang up with a gleeful look in his eye and screeched, "Ha ha HA! I'm a porcupine, and you've got PORKS in you!"

////////////////////////////////////

ADDITIONAL PRESS DEPT.:

AOUDAD, cf. P.30:

RUSSIA TO TURKEY AND GERMANY: What am I supposed to do when I don't hear from two of my neighbors on the first move? Sharpen your pencils and maybe I'll change directions.

BEAR, cf. P.31:

FRANCE: Today Emperor Anderson announced that the country of Portugal is now France, with Lisbon to be renamed Paris. And in a stern warning to the world, the Emperor said, "We only need 17 centers to go for the win!"

////////////////////////////////////

GAME 1984Ygf24 - Wilson S. Bissel (W.W. IIb) -

GUEST-GAMESMASTER: David Anderson, PO Box 3761, Pontiac, MI 48059.

The following adjudication was submitted directly from David to all players. Please note one change: THE DEADLINE FOR ALL MOVES IS HEREBY REVISED TO WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 2, 1987!!!

NEW ADDRESSES (including address of New Player):

James Wall, 1713 Onsgard St., #7, Madison, WI 53704

Marc Peters, 4002 Hanover St., Madison, WI 53704

John Crosby, 1496 Washington Lane, West Chester, PA 19382 (NEW PLAYER FOR U.S.A.)

FALL 2111

AUSTRALIA (Eric Ozog): f gr.aus.b. - s.in.o. f e.in.o s gr.aus.b. - s.in.o.
f tim.s - w.aus. f n.z. s s.pac. f coral s s.pac. f s.pac h. f phil.

s. s w.pac. f w.pac h. f philip-s.ch.s. f kyu h. f hon h. a viet h.

BRAZIL (James Wall): a la pam - chi. a porto h. a goi h. a guy-bel. f
s.w.atl - s.s.atl. f g.gui-gui. a mau-gui. f gui-c.at.o. f mor-

alg. f mo.as. s gui-c.at.o. f n.w.atl s ber.tri - m.at.o. f ber.tri -
m.at.o. a sah s mor-alg.

UNION OF S.AFRICA: f g.gui /r/ o.t.b. f gha, f s.e.atl, f s.in.o, a c.af.,
a tanz, a camer, a zaire h.

EUROPEAN COMMON MKT. (Mark Keller): f n.at. - m.at. f spa sc s n.at.-m.at.
f fra nc - n.at. f w.me s m.at - mor. f m.at - mor. a alg s m.at-mor.

PERU (Jim Burgess): f gal.s. s e.pac - s.pac. f fal.s s e.pac - s.pac.
 f e.pac - s.pac. f falk.is. s fal.s. f g.pan - e.pac. f g.ala -
 n.e.pac. f ala s g.ala - n.e.pac. f n.e.pac - c.pac. f b.c. s ala.
 f g.cal s n.e.pac. - c.pac. f inoa-cuz. a bue-rio. a tex h. a que
 h. f lab.s - ice.

WEST AFRICAN EMPIRE (Andy Lischett): a mali-gui.

CANADA (c.d.): a n.eng h.

WARSAW PACT (Mark Frueh): a ken s sud-zai. a sud-zai. a cze-w.ger. f bal-
 katt. a ukr-rum. f adr-e.med. a niger-lib. f egy-red. f w.in.o. -
 malag. f mad s ara-e.in.o. f ara-e.in.o.

USSR (Marc Peters): f hok s n.w.pac. f hon s n.w.pac. f ber s n.w.pac.
 f chuk s ber. f n.w.pac s ber. f s.ja s hon. f geo-tur. f rus nc -
 bar. f gr.s. - green. f ice s ECM n.at. a inn.m. s szech. f e.med
 s ECM w.med. a szech h. a tib-sink. a ass-tib. a pra s WAR mad.
 a kash-pak. a rum h. a s.ko h.

RETREATS: AUS f e.in.o. - tim.s, sum, b.ben, w.in, o.t.b.

USA a zai - gab, ang, zam, o.t.b.

ECM a alg - tun, niger, o.t.b.

CENTRES:

AUS: 12: w.aus, nwt, nz, bru, jav, phil, pap, thai, kyu, viet, hon. +1

BRA: 13: mato, bel, bah, sur, ven, bol, lap, uru, cuba, hai, gui, dix,
 maur. -1.

CAN: 0: OUT.

ECM: 6: u.k., spa, fra, tun, nwy, mor. Even.

PER: 15: ecu, inc, napo, col, pan, hon, s.cr, b.a., falk, cal, tex, ala,
 ont, b.c., que. Even.

USA: 6: tran, ang, zam, gab, cam, nig. Even.

WAR: 14: yug, gre, aus, egy, sau, som, syr, ken, mad, pol, hun, sud, mal,
 lib. Build three.

WAF: 1: mali. Even.

USSR: 21: rus, geo, kaz, sib, kam, mon, swe, tsi, s.ko, bang, pak, sak, hok,
 hon, raj, sse, pra, iran, rum, ice, green. Build two.

This is what I copied from David. Note, however, that these data don't quite compute. Australia is listed for 12 total, but I only get 11 names. Also, the grand total is supposed to be 89, but I add up to only 88. I sure hope David's flyer has worked this out....

Anyway: Draw proposals. (1) USSR/PER/BRA/AUS. (2) Same + WAR. (3) Same + WAR and USA. (4) AUS/WAR/BRA/PER. (5) Same +ECM. Votes with adjustments; under David's rules, if No Moves (or No Votes) are received, you will be counted as 'yes' on all proposals.

NOTE ONCE AGAIN: DEADLINE FOR RETREATS & ADJUSTMENTS IS SEPT. 2, 1987.

.. / .. / .. / .. / .. / .. / .. / .. / .. / .. / .. / .. / .. / .. / .. / ..

Three pieces of string go to a bar. The first orders a drink, but is turned away. The second orders as well, but is similarly rejected. Then the third went away, disguised himself, and came back to order a drink. "Are you a piece of string?" asked the barkeep. "No, I'm afrayed not...."

(Shamelessly swiped from BEOWULF)

THE MAILBOX IS STILL FULL:

ANDREW ENGLAND: "I walked out to my mailbox this afternoon and I found a letter and a package, both bearing U.S. stamps and a San Diego postmark. 'San Diego!', I thought. 'That's the abode of that scoundrel Dennie Conner who stole our America's Cup. Upon further inspection I discovered that the return address belonged to one Conrad von Metzke. 'I know that name!,' I mused. Then my mind barked back to a column by Rod Walker in THE GENERAL entitled "Twenty-five Years of Grabbing Dots." My God! An American bigwig has written to me!

"Well, thank you very much for your letter and the copy of COSTA. I haven't had the opportunity to examine ((the latter)) closely, but from the outside looking in, I am quite impressed. Yes, I would be more than happy to trade...((o))ne of the main reasons I wrote to Simon...was to get a trade going with a U.S. Dip 'zine. Success!

"I have enclosed a copy of my most recent issue of BEOWULF ((reviewed elsewhere herein)). You may care to note that the first game in it is entitled 'Grendel.' Is this luck or fate? ((How about 'similar literary interests?' Personally, I find Prof. Tolkien's translation the most gratifying. Do you have other preferences?)) BEOWULF is not my first foray into publishing a Dip 'zine. I am a 22-year-old 'junior' lawyer, unmarried (but not single) and a dedicated Diplomacy player. I first discovered the game in 1975 at the ripe old age of eleven, and have been playing it ever since. My other interests include composing and performing electronic music, philately, drama and archaeology. Oh yes, and history (particularly Mediaeval - hence 'BEOWULF').

"Anyway, after that I expect that I should fill you in on what's been happening in the Diplomacy hobby 'Down Under.' As far as anyone is aware, there was a Dip 'zine or two in existence before 1980, but the exact extent of the hobby at that time is not known. ((Well, we'll take care of that!)) I've never heard of Tas Ryrie ((major figure in 1970's Auside 'Dip')), so perhaps you could fill us in on our early history. In any case, sometime between 1975 and 1979 the postal hobby died. However, in 1980 it was revived by a chap called Richard Williams, who began a 'zine called AUSTRAL VIEW which is now in its 83d issue (though not in its original form). This was when I became involved in the postal side of the hobby. In 1983, another magazine called THE GO-BETWEEN was founded. This 'zine originally began as a Diplomacy-only publication, but in 1985 it was taken over by a commercial PBM company which has gradually transformed it from a Dip 'zine into one on computer-moderated PBM games. Sad, but true. Also in 1985, a bloke by the name of Luke Clutterbuck, a student just returning from University study in England, started his own 'zine called RUMPLESTILTSKIN. In early 1986 both AUSTRAL VIEW and RUMPLE merged to form THE ENVOY. This 'zine is now an uncontrollable monster (the last issue was 72 pages, and that every 5 weeks) which makes me feel guilty because I was one of those responsible for creating it. You see, I edited AUSTRAL VIEW in 1984 after Richard Williams' forced retirement. Earlier this year, the editorship of THE ENVOY was transferred from here (Adelaide) to Sydney to be taken up by a delightful lady named Marion Ashworth, a self-confessed housewife with 'heaps of time.'

"So you can see that there was really only one Dip 'zine in Australia, and that's part of the reason I started BEOWULF, to take pressure off THE ENVOY. That was in May this year, and since then I and others have been trying to encourage the birth of Dip 'zines - and it looks like there'll

be ones starting in both Victoria and Tasmania. The other reason for BEOWULF is to satisfy a personal desire to create my own 'zine from scratch. So far I'm quite pleased with the results. ((And well you ought to be!!!))

"The level of organization in Australia is rather low in comparison to what you Yanks have achieved; we have a national ratings system but that's about it. No Ombudsman, no "Boardman" numbers, no variant bank, etc. Rather primitive, aren't we? But we are slowly working towards something better.

"Your 'zine is the third American one I have seen, the others being one old copy of WHITESTONIA and, of course, DIPLOMACY WORLD. I have also seen several British 'zines. BEOWULF is reasonably representative of the format of Australian Dip 'zines. It is interesting to note the differences in style between the U.S. and Australia. The main difference is in the game reports. We dedicate one page per game, with map, while you guys seem to be all type."

((Well, Andrew - a hearty welcome to the broader scene, and I hope you are prepared for quite a few of us - here and in U.K. - to get in touch.

((I've said, and I mean it, that I will do my best to provide you with some background on your predecessors in Australian PBM Dip. I know that two, maybe even three, 'zines were going for a time, but as you say they died out about ten years ago. Anyway, I'll send what I can.

((Australia now having revived its formerly dead hobby, that leaves only one country which once had a PBM hobby that has died and never been resuscitated. Of course - South Africa! Of course, these days at least I have no real interest in having them back....

((Electronic music? When next you write, could you be a bit more specific? I'd enjoy hearing from you, in as much depth as you can provide, of your interests here. It just so happens that I'm a serious musician myself; in my case, though, not electronic, though I do find quite a bit of that sort of thing worth my while. Mainly, I am a singer, of serious classical training; I've done opera and Lieder recitals, and am fairly well-versed in musicology right up to the present day - including hard-rock. Try me!

((Philately? Many years ago - actually, before you were born - I was a specialist collector of New Zealand. I gave that up, dropped out of the field, then returned five years ago and took up a specialty in Austria and British Borneo (esp. Brunei Darussalam). Those interests have again given way to something far more specific; at this writing I collect exactly one stamp! - Austria, Scott Cat. #P10, the newspaper stamp of 1890. I have over 20,000 copies of the thing, mounted in three albums, and acquire and study as many as I can obtain. I also work, albeit less intensively, with philatelic items of Austrian Judaism, and with modern anti-drug issues. Cf. the current cover.

((Drama? Do you know Dürrenmatt? Archaeology? Care to hear about my studies of nearby Mexican Indian cave paintings?

((Hey - this could be a fine friendship! Never mind, of course, that I am literally twice your age....

((As to your 'primitive' level of hobby organization, don't worry about it. Organization has its drawbacks. Naturally, we fanatics would very much like to have game numbers assigned to your games, and report their statistics; but as for variant banks, Ombudsmen, etc., forget it; you don't need 'em. The less formal you become, the better off you'll be....

((Now - how about a gamestart including one player from each of your States and Territories? Or haven't you accessed the Northern Territory yet? Well, hell!, let's get even more interesting; find a player in that dependency of yours, Christmas Island! We could have a contest - you find one there before the Canadians, whom I've been working on for twenty years, find a player in St. Pierre et Miquelon!))

THE WINDING-DOWN

Forty-three pages were filled with care and attention, and I am quite pleased with them. Four additional pages, constituting the cover, have achieved the same status. But this fails to come out even. And so I do hereby present to you

THE ABSOLUTE FILLER PAGE

AND NOW FOR SOMETHING COMPLETELY

Southern!

No, no, not Mississippi or any similar swamp. This one is really Southern - specifically, South Australia. BEOWULF, a relatively new 'zine gorgeously produced (digest) and superbly written by a young lawyer named Andrew England (91 College Road, Somerton Park 5044, South Australia) is now in Issue 4, and there is absolutely nothing 'provincial' about it. (Andrew has in fact had prior experience.) Several games, nicely run and laid out with the finest maps I've yet seen anywhere; plenty of letters and chat, fine graphics, 24 pages and only a lousy buck (Australian!) per copy.

Andrew and his lot are not, by the way, successors to the previous Australian hobby of Tas Ryrle back in the early '70s. In fact, Andrew says he's never heard of his predecessor except to the extent that some sort of PBM hobby once existed. I'm trying to get some old copies to send along; maybe information on his hobby's "roots" will somehow compensate for the fact that we have no intention of returning the America's Cup.

An astonishing feature of this Issue 4 is a major "Opening Survey," treating with the opening moves of each power in all games thus begun in Australia. Astonishing? Yes, because from this we learn that this obscure fledgling hobby Down There has about sixty (gaep!) games going, not including variants - and NO BOARDMAN NUMBERS!

The Australian dollar is worth about 70c U.S., and about 97c Canadian. If anyone wishes to subscribe, I'd be happy to channel funds, as I have a ready exchange for all three currencies. Add about 20% for air.

Well, against initial expectations, I think we've got something on this 'filler' page well worth having. So it wasn't a leftover waste after all.

May all of you be well and happy and healthy, at least through next issue. (Kind of a variant on the 'one day at a time' system....)

-adieu

THE CREAM SHALL RISE

is a publication detailing the results of the North American 'Zine Poll, a.k.a. the "Runestone Poll." As usual, I won this year. Tiresome, wot?

Anyway - this massive effort is the result of an immense labor of love by the ubiquitous Bruce Linsey, and when I gave last year's effort the most glowing review of which I was capable, I made a serious error: I failed to allow for the possibility that this year's effort would be even better. Oh well.

Modestly, I would have to confess that a photo of myself (by the very fine photographer Leslie Lucas, now Leslie Laurie) is about as auspicious a beginning as one can imagine. Astonishingly, Bruce and his in-depth analysis of virtually every conceivable ramification of the annual competition among Diplomacy 'zines manages to surpass the magnificence of Leslie's photo of me. Not by much....

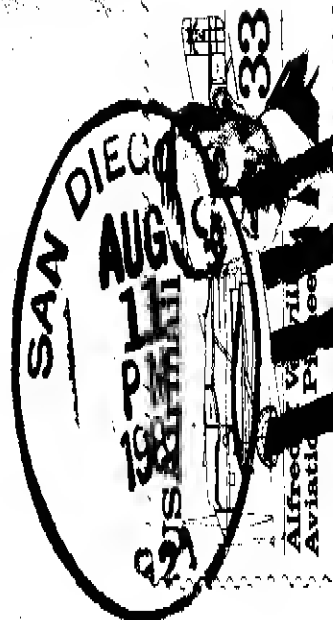
One small gripe. The charts, photo-reduced as they are, are quite difficult to read; in future, I recommend either a lower reduction percentage or larger master type. But, hey...if I didn't scrounge up at least one quibble, you'd think I was reviewing the Bible. In general, this is one magnificent 88-page effort, and the selling price is cheap: \$1 if you voted in the Poll, \$2 if you didn't.

Order a copy. Gaze upon my visage, towering 6'8" above the dock of the post office at which I work. Then read the incredible depth of comment, analysis and discussion which Bruce has put into this monster effort.

It boggles the mind....

Conrad von Metske
(Grendel Press Division)
4374 Donald Avenue
San Diego, CA 92117-3813
USA

FIRST
CLASS



AS I LAY DYING, AN INTRUDER IN THE
DUST, I ASKED SANCTUARY, AMID THE
SOUND AND THE FURY, IN THE HAMLET
OF THE REIVERS.

WELCOME TO THE TOWN OF NEW ORLEANS!

THE GAMEFINDER

is on one of the
inside covers.
(You think maybe
you can take it
from here?)

Larry Peery
PO Box 8416
San Diego CA 92102-0416